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L. b. 13.

A

JOURNEY

THROUGH

RUSSIA

INTO

PERSIA;

BY TWO

English GENTLEMEN,

Who went in the Year 1739,

From *Peterſburg*, in order to make a Diſcovery how the Trade from *Great Britain* might be carried on from *Aſtracan* over the *Caſpian*.

To which is annex'd,

A ſummary Account of the *Riſe* of the famous *KOULI KAN*, and his *Succeſſes*, till he ſeated himſelf on the *Perſian* Throne.

LONDON:

Printed for R. DODSLEY, at *Tully*'s Head in *Pall-Mall*; and Sold by T. COOPER, at the Globe in *Pater-noſter Row*. 1742.

TO

Sir *John Thompson*,

Governor of the *Russia* Company,

THIS

LITTLE TREATISE

Is most humbly inscrib'd,

AS A

TESTIMONY

Of his many

VIRTUES;

Particularly of his known

BENEVOLENCE,

And ready Disposition to promote a

PUBLICK GOOD,

Manifest in his Assiduity in procuring

An ACT to open a Trade to *Persia*

Through the

Russian Dominions,

BY HIS

Most Humble Servant,

James Spilman.

0148

A

JOURNEY

FROM

MOSCO to *MESHED*,

The New CAPITAL of

PERSIA.

WE left *Mosco* the 14th of *March* 1738--9, and travell'd to *Muram*, a City which ſtands on the North Bank of the River *Occa*, about 240 * Verſts diſtance. This River is very conſiderable, and falls into the River *Volga* at *Niſna-Novogorod*, and our Road lay croſs it. The Ice ſtood faſt, but was full of Holes, rotten and dangerous; but it being then a hard Froſt, clear and Moon-light, at Midnight we ventured to croſs it, and got ſafe over. From hence we pro-

* A Verſt is about three quarters of a Mile *Engliſh*.

ceeded about 160 Verſts farther to the City of *Aſſamas*; here we found the Rivulets much ſwelled with the melting of the Snow, and the Ice in them broken up, that we could not continue our Journey any farther, till the Waters abated, and that we might conveniently travel with Waggons, which we had a good Opportunity to provide ourſelves with. The latter part of our Journey proved as tedious to ourſelves as it was heavy for our Horſes, being frequently obliged to quit the main Road, and go far round about on account of the Overflowing of the ſmall Rivers; two of our Horſes died with the Fatigue, and the reſt were much harraſs'd. We arrived at *Aſſamas* the 21ſt, and took up our Quarters in an adjacent Village the 4th of *April*; we provided ourſelves with Waggons and freſh Carriers, and finding the Waters pretty well drain'd off the Land, we departed for *Saratoff*. Travelling began to be pleaſant as our Courſe was to the S. E. and as the Summer advanced, the Roads every Day grew better on the *Step*, or Wilderneſs, where we found great Plenty of wild Ducks, Snipes, Heathcocks, and other Birds, that we ſhot more than enough to ſupply us, and lived wholly on Game. At this time there was no Graſs on the *Step*, that we were forced to carry Hay and Corn with us for our Horſes, during our four Days travelling over it; and ſhould have found it very agreeable, but that one or other of us were obliged to be continually on the Watch, for fear of being ſurprized. At about 20 Verſts diſtance from each other, through the *Step*, are certain Houſes called *Zaimoira's*, built for the Accommodation of Travellers in Winter. At theſe Places we were

were forced to take up our Lodging, on account of Water, which in other Places was ſcarce. Theſe *Zamoira's* are as good a Harbour for Rogues, as others, which obliged us to be more than ordinary on our Guard; neither could we put any great Confidence in our Waggoners. We had two *Ruſs* Servants, and we were two, that we divided ourſelves in the Night into two Watches, and this Method we continued all the way down the *Volga*.

The 15th of *April* we arrived at the City of *Saratoff*, about Noon, and waited on the *Voyavode*, or Governor. We found great Difficulty to get us Quarters, the Town having been burnt about a Year before. The Company of *Armenians*, whom we were in great Hopes to have found here, had ſailed from hence two Days before, ſo that we had no other Chance but to proceed down the *Volga* by ourſelves. What diſtreſſed us moſt was to get a Paſſage, for we could find none but large Boats or Veſſels, which were bound down the *Volga* with Meal, which might probably be a Month in their Paſſage to *Aſtracan*; the large * *Lotka*'s, or *Canoe*'s, which uſed to be here in great Numbers, were gone on the *Sturgeon* Fiſhery, and the few that remained were all fitting out on the ſame Deſign, and were not to be hired or purchaſed on any Terms; ſo that we were at the greateſt Loſs imaginable how to get to *Aſtracan* time enough to ſecure our Paſſage croſs the *Caſpian* in the ſame Veſſel with the *Armenians*.

* *Lotka*, a ſmall Boat ſow'd together with Willow. *Canoe*, a Boat cut out of a ſolid Tree.

This being of great Consequence, in order to effect it, we determined to proceed in such a Boat as we could get, if she was but large enough to carry our Goods; but our Inquiry was in vain, they were one and all engaged for the *Fishery*. While we were in this Dilemma, a Vessel arrived with Passengers from *Samahra*, and we were informed that there was a spare *Lotka* belonging to her; we immediately went to see it, and finding it might do in the Emergency we were in, and there being no other to be had, we bought her for three * Rubles and an half. She being old and leaky, it required two Days to let her dry e're we could trim her, and new *pay* her Bottom; in the mean Time we provided her with Mast and Sails, and shipped five Hands to go with us to *Astracan*. The third Day, she being fitted and ready, we put our Goods on board her, for then we found Room enough, and for some part of our Baggage and Provisions; but the far greatest Part of the latter we were forced to leave behind, to be sent after us the first Opportunity; and we found just room for four Oars, and two of us to sit in the † *Stern-sheats*. But the worst was, when we all got into the Boat, being now ten in Number, she swam so deep that we were in great Doubt with ourselves whether to proceed in her or not; but being urged by Necessity, knowing the singular Advantage it would be to us, if possible, to join those *Armenians* that were before us, so as to be able to cross the *Caspian* in the same Vessel with them, (otherwise missing that Opportunity we might lose half the Summer

* A Ruble is 1 *s.* 6 *d.* † Stern.

mer before another Vessel sailed for *Rashd*, and that arriving there late in the Summer might probably occasion us to winter in *Gilan*, which would be a Twelve-month's loss of time) on using the utmost Caution, we found the Boat might carry us down safely, we resolved to proceed with her. On the Security of our little Cargo, our Experiment in *Persia*, and all our Hopes that way depended; for to arrive at *Astracan* with our Goods damaged, was in effect not to arrive there at all. These Difficulties made us in a Manner forget the Danger of *Pirates*, which we were informed might fall in our way about *Zolotova*. One of us had been at this Inlet before, and knew it to be a very likely Place to harbour Villains; but as we had Arms more than sufficient, and we heard that these Rogues were, as yet, unprovided with them, we did not doubt but to make our Party good in case they should attack us.

The 20th of *April* we cast off and left *Sarahtoff*: We were detain'd some Hours every Day by contrary Winds, which blew fresh; this obliged us to go very near the Entrance of *Zolotova* Inlet, which else we did not intend. We had scarce open'd this Inlet, e'er we came on a sudden in sight of at least forty People, who were within Pistol-shot of us on the Bank, and by them was five or six large Boats. We instantly stood to our Arms, and asked them who they were, and where they were going. They answer'd, they belong'd to *Nesna Novogorod*, and were going down to *Astracan*. We rowed down about a Mile lower, and went ashore; but before we had got out of the Boat, one of their Boats put off and came directly down to us, and

and hover'd ſome time about us; but we kept our People to the Boat with their Arms ready. She held on her Way down the *Volga*; we tarried about an Hour to refreſh ourſelves, and then it being calm we continu'd on our Way. About Midnight one of their Boats came again up pretty cloſe to us, but on our calling to her ſhe kept off. Soon after came the reſt of their Boats in ſight; but on our calling and threatening to fire into them if they came any nearer, they thought fit to *ſheer* off. If theſe were Villains, they ſeeing us well provided with Arms, and always on our Guard, they durſt not venture to attack us. We thought they might be *Boerlacks*, or Labourers going down to *Aſtracan*; but as we were forewarn'd, it would not have been Prudence for us to truſt them, eſpecially as we had heard theſe Fellows, when they have an Opportunity, do moſt of the Miſchief that is done on the *Volga*. Several ſuch ſort of Alarms we had before we reach'd *Aſtracan*, ſometimes occaſioned by the *Ruſſians*, ſometimes by the *Calmucks*; (which with contrary Winds, and our Boat's being ſo deep, both of which oblig'd us often to make faſt to the Shore; which, if we had been in a larger Boat and more Oars, we could have prevented and held on our Way;) it was a Fortnight e'er we arrived at *Aſtracan*, and we were thoroughly fatigued. For when we were in the Boat, whoſoever's Turn it was to ſleep, there was no Room to lye down, but he muſt ſleep ſitting, which is almoſt as bad as watching; and when at Night we made faſt to the Shore, the Danger of being ſurpriz'd by Villains gave us but painful Sleep. Going down the *Volga* from *Saratoff* is not in the leaſt dangerous, provided one

one has a good Boat and a well-arm'd Company: Then he has nothing to fear from *Calmucks* or *Ruſs* Pirates; but we being in quite contrary Circumſtances, made it very hazardous and fatiguing. On the 4th of *May* we arrived at *Aſtracan*, ſecured our Boat, and took a ſound Sleep void of Fear for that part of the Night; in the Morning we ſoon got us Quarters, and our Goods and Baggage on Shore. Here we found the Company of *Armenians* we ſo much wanted to join, who intended to load their Goods on board one of the *Czarina*'s Veſſels, which was to ſail for *Reſhd* in about three Weeks. We had all this Time to inform ourſelves about the *Perſian* Trade, and how it was carried on both by the *Ruſſians* as well as the *Armenians*: We found the latter very ſhy in giving us Information, fearing we came to put in for a Share with them in their Profits; therefore we could make no ſure Dependence on what they inform'd us: Which was, that hitherto the Trade from *Aſtracan* to *Perſia* had been free and open, and foreign Merchants importing Goods into *Perſia* might carry them to what Market they liked beſt, and diſpoſe of them to whom they pleaſed; but this Year all Goods that arrived at *Reſhd* were obliged to be ſold there, and that the * *Shach* would not permit any one to buy them except his own Merchants; for altho' they may keep the Goods by them if they do not like the Price the *Shach*'s Merchants offer, yet they could not carry them to any other Market, or ſell them to any other. Alſo that the *Shach* had engroſs'd all the Raw-Silk to himſelf, ſo that thoſe who would buy Silk muſt buy it of his Mer-

* *Shah*, as Mr. *Fraſer* writes it.

Merchants, and not of the *Persian Boors* as formerly.

We were likewise assur'd, that the *English East-India-Company*'s Servants had quitted *Ispahan*; and, as these * *Joulfa Armenians* gave out, were obliged to leave that City on the express Order of *Nadir Shach*, whose Displeasure they had some way incurr'd. These *Armenians* are the greatest Traders of all that Nation, and it is they who carry on so considerable a Trade thro' *Russia* to *Amsterdam*. Besides, they told us, that it was certain that the *Legistan* or Mountain *Tartars* of the Province of *Shervan*, had rebell'd against *Nadir Shach*; had cut off his Brother and many of his Troops who were sent to quell them; but that this Rebellion did not interrupt the Trade of the Province of *Gilan*.

All things being thus unhappily circumstanced made us determine to proceed directly from *Astracan* to *Chiva*, and thence to *Bokhara*, for which Place the Goods that we had with us were chiefly sorted and designed; in order to which we view'd a Vessel belonging to a *Russ* Merchant, which was bound to a Landing-Place, where a Ferry-Boat brings Goods of all Sorts proper for that Country, on the East Side of the *Caspian*, from whence cross the *Step* (or Desert) in about ten Days we might arrive at *Chiva*, and so on to *Bokhara*, to which Place two *Russ* Factors were going in this Vessel, and also several *Chisinsky Tartars*, who came in this same Vessel from the Port or Landing-Place last Year. But on more mature Deliberation we were forced to lay aside this Design, tho' with much

* *Joulfa Armenians* are such of them as are the Inhabitants of *Ispahan*, and are the richest of them.

much Regret, since our Curiosity made us eager to have seen *Bakhar*, and from thence to have return'd back thro' *Persia*: At the former we were sure to have sold our Goods for a considerable Profit, and at the same time have gained Knowledge of a Country so little known to *Europeans*, and on which we chiefly placed our Hopes. The chief Reasons that dissuaded us were, that the Vessel, on examining her, we found to be an old crazy flat-bottom Fishing Vessel, our Companions to be only two or three mean *Russians*, and in crossing the *Step* to *Chiva* from the Place we land, the great Risque we run of being plunder'd and sold for Slaves. For though it should be true that the *Khan*, or Governor, does on Notice of this Vessel's Arrival at the Landing-place, send a small Convoy to meet and protect the *Carravan* (so the Goods and Passengers this Vessel bring are call'd;) yet this is but a slender Security, as he may at the same time send a much stronger Party to plunder them. All the *Tartars* are known to be most subtil and artful at Stratagems, therefore one must be always on one's Guard, and cautious in dealing with them, for they won't fail to deceive you if any way they possibly can. But what prevail'd with us most to desist from this Expedition, was the Certainty we had of the *Persians* having fallen into that Country; so that had we arrived safe at *Chiva* and *Bakhara*, there was little Hopes of our Return by the Way of *Persia*; and if so, then the principal End of our Journey would have been lost, and we should have gain'd no Information of the Silk Trade in the Province of *Gilan*; to which Place we were forced again to turn our Eye, tho' we had

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but a ſad and gloomy Proſpect in that Quarter. What ſupported us was, that the *Armenians* ſhipped off Goods for *Reſhd*, and ſo we now reſolved to do, and to ſtand the ſame Chance they did.

Before we had ſeen *Aſtracan* we were very much prejudiced in its Favour, and concluded from its Situation (ſo commodiouſly as we imagined) it muſt be very beautiful, *&c.* but we did not find it ſo. It ſtands 100 * Verſts from the Bar, at the principal Entrance of the *Volga*. This is very inconvenient, becauſe thoſe Ships or Veſſels that are fit for the *Caſpian*, are not adapted for mounting the Stream of the *Volga*, from the Road at the Entrance of the *Volga* to *Aſtracan*, and which they are frequently longer about than in making their Voyage or Paſſage croſs the *Caſpian*, beſides the Delays they are ſubject to, both in going and coming, from the Guard-Ship at the Entrance of the *Volga*. Whereas had *Aſtracan* been actually a Sea-Port on the *Caſpian*, all theſe and many more Inconveniences had been avoided. There does not appear to be above 20 or 25 Veſſels which croſs the *Caſpian*, that belong to the *Ruſs* Merchants of *Aſtracan*; there are ſome of them a Sort of Fly-boats; the reſt are *Smacks* or *Hoys*, the former are about 250 Tons burthen, the latter 100 to 150 Tons. Whilſt the Crown of *Ruſſia* kept the Province of *Gilan* in its Poſſeſſion, the *Ruſſians* of *Aſtracan* employed their Veſſels themſelves, chiefly in carrying Proviſions of all Kinds to ſupply the *Ruſſian* Army; but now their Veſſels are moſtly freight-

* 100 Verſts is 75 Miles.

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ed by the *Armenians*, for whom they carry Goods and Paſſengers to and from *Aſtracan* to *Derbent*, *Backu* and *Reſhd*; alſo in carrying * *Nephta* and Paſſengers from *Backu* to *Reſhd*, for the *Perſians*; likewiſe Proviſions for the *Ruſſian* Garriſon, and others at *Turky*. The *Ruſs* Merchants at *Aſtracan*, of whom there are many very rich, don't concern themſelves much with foreign Trade, which is in a manner wholly in the Hands of the *Armenians* and *Indians*, but confine themſelves to the Fiſheries on the *Caſpian* and *Volga*, in which they find great Profit. They ſend very large Veſſels up the *Volga*, ſome of them 400 even to 500 Tons, loaded with Salt Fiſh, chiefly *Sturgeon*, *Belluga*, † *Sizan*, and ‡ *Sudack*. The Sizan are found in infinite Quantities both above and below *Aſtracan*. Theſe great Veſſels aſcend the Stream of the *Volga* quite to the City of *Macao*, where they arrive at the Time of the Fair, and bring back from thence, and from the other Cities and Towns adjacent on the *Volga*, Proviſions of all Sorts to ſupply the City of *Aſtracan*, near which, for many hundred Miles, little or no Corn grows.

The *Armenians* and *Indians* are the principal Shopkeepers in *Aſtracan* for foreign Commodities. The former have a Suburb to themſelves; thoſe of them who reſide conſtantly at *Aſtracan* have Houſes for their Families; but both *Indians* and *Armenians*, who only come and go to and from *Perſia*, live in *Caravanſera's*, or publick Inns.

* *Nephta*, an Oil uſed in Lamps, *&c.* which iſſues out of ſome Mountains near *Aſtracan* and *Backu*.

† *Sizan*, Carp of a prodigious Size.

‡ *Sudack*, like a Codling, but much better.

The

The *Russian* Fleet, which belongs to the Government, is chiefly laid up at *Astracan*, where there is an Admiralty, in which the commanding Officer, who is commonly a Lieutenant, resides; he has under his Command two Lieutenants, a Body of Soldiers, Carpenters, and others. But there is another Ship-yard (just within the Bar, at the Entrance into the *Volga* out of the *Caspian*, 90 Versts below *Astracan*) it is named *Jerkee*. Here are fitted out and laid up all the Vessels of the Crown that annually cross the *Caspian*, and it is a convenient Place to fit or careen at; the worst at this Place is, that when it blows hard at S. E. and E. S. E. the Island of *Jerkee* is liable to be laid wholly under Water, without the Bar. Thirty Versts below is a sandy Island, named *Cheterybuger*; on this Island is a Light-house or Beacon; and off this Island lay the principal Guard-ship. This is a tolerable good Road, where Ships may ride in two and two Fathom and an half Water, within about a Mile or two from the Shoar, and in four Fathom Water about a League off the Shoar. Here it is that all Vessels coming from *Gilan*, *Backu* and *Derbent*, perform their *Quarentine*, but the Passengers commonly have Leave to perform theirs on Shoar on the Island. Thus far the Command of the *Astracan* Admiralty seems to extend (though the Sovereignty of all the *Caspian* was claimed by *Peter* the Great, when he was at *Astracan*, on his Expedition into *Persia*. The deepest Water that was then found on the Bar was not above six Feet, but now there is full nine Feet Water on the Bar. This was not occasioned by the shifting of the Sands, but by the encreasing or rising of the Water in the *Caspian*, which they

they say is found to encrease for fifteen Years, and decrease for the same Time, on all the Shoars of the *Caspian*; and hence it comes that the Island *Jerkee* is liable to be laid wholly under Water.

As to *Astracan*, though it stands on a low sandy Island, it is not subject to be overflowed, yet some part of its Suburbs are sometimes. This City is enclosed with a high brick Wall, on which are Battlements after the old manner, as is also the *Citadel*. It is very populous, and the *Caravansera* and Market make a very noble Appearance; but the Houses are chiefly built of Wood, which being scarce here, they are most of them built out of the Timber of Vessels, which bring Provisions from the upper part of the *Volga*, and are afterwards commonly sold for that Purpose; and indeed as *Astracan* is wholly supply'd with Provisions by the *Volga*, it causes a great Confluence of Vessels thither.

On the 23d of *May*, being informed by the Lieutenant Commander of the Admiralty, that a Vessel belonging to the Empress would sail for *Reshd*, we immediately put our Goods and Baggage on board a Vessel to proceed down the *Volga*, and the next Day in the Afternoon arrived at *Jerkee*; the Midshipman, that commands there, gave us the best Quarters he could procure us, which was a Sail-loft; for the Houses there are but very mean ones, except the Admiralty-house, which consists of four Rooms, in which are quartered four Midshipmen. We arrived at *Jerkee* five Days before the *Armenians*, and were forced to tarry five Days longer before they had loaded their Goods, and the Vessel ready to sail.

June

June 3d. We left *Jerkee*, in fair Weather and a Calm, ſo we drove with the Stream over the Bar. The Circumſtances of our Voyage we refer to the Log-Book, and only obſerve, that after a very Fair-weather Paſſage of about a Fortnight we arrived ſafe in *Zinzella Road*, and the next Day got into the Bar and enter'd the Haven. *Zinzella* is the Sea-port of the City of *Reſhd*, the principal City of the Province of *Gilan*. There is about nine Foot Water on the Bar. On the following Day we ſailed and warped croſs *Zinzella* Lake, which is about five Leagues over, and came to a ſmall Village on the ſouth Bank of the Lake, named *Perre Buzzar*. Here the *Perſian* Cuſtom-houſe Officers have their Station, and all the Goods deſign'd for *Reſhd* are landed; there are ſome old Warehouſes built by the *Ruſſians*. The City of *Reſhd* ſtands inland eight Miles from *Perre Buzzar*, and from whence Goods are carried to the City.

June 21ſt. We landed our Goods and Baggage, and after they had been viſited by the Cuſtom-houſe Officers, we proceeded directly with them to *Reſhd*, where when we arrived they were lodged in the Cuſtom-houſe; but our Baggage after it had been inſpected was immediately returned us. Our Goods remain'd about three Days in the Cuſtom-houſe, in which time they were open'd, view'd and valued; the Duty on their Valuation was *Five per Cent.* in the current Coin: They gave us them, and left it to us when to diſcharge the Duty. We were obliged to take up our Lodgings in a very indifferent *Carravanſera*, no better Quarters being on a ſudden to be had: The beſt of them here are but mean ones, the Rooms having no Light but what

what comes in at the Door, and are rather a ſmall ſort of Cells than Rooms; that we, who had never been lodg'd ſo before, could not help thinking that we were in a *Jail*.

It was nine Days before we could get a Houſe, which we hired for five Rubles a Month. In this Houſe the *Ruſſian* Conſul formerly lived: It was a pleaſant airy Place; it ſeem'd a Heaven to us, if compar'd to our *Carravanſera*. On our Arrival here it was our greateſt Concern in what Character to act, being ſuch intire Strangers, and the firſt *Engliſhmen* that ever came hither on account of Trade. It ſuited our Inclinations beſt, as it was our Deſign, to have liv'd privately and unobſerv'd, and ſo to have return'd; but this we found utterly impracticable, for the *Joulfa Armenians* at *Aſtracan*, as well as thoſe who came over in the ſame Veſſel with us, being much alarm'd at our coming, had inform'd every body of us, particularly the *Vizir* and *Muſtapha*, the Commanders of the Province of *Gilan*, and whom, we were well aſſured, they endeavour'd to prejudice againſt us. Therefore had we pretended our Journey hither was only out of Curioſity, it might have proved fatal to us, by giving the *Armenians* an Opportunity to have inſinuated that we were *Spies*, and were come here only on ſome miſchievous Purpoſe. After ſome Conſideration, and the beſt Information we could get of the Nature and Humour of the *Perſians*, we determin'd to act in our own proper Character as Merchants, being the ſafeſt, and what we could abide by at all Events; and to prevent the *Vizir*'s ſending to enquire who we were, it would be better to wait on him ourſelves, and to tell him our own Story: The *Vizir* being

being out of Town, one of us waited on *Mustapha* (who is Commander of the City in his Absence) who was receiv'd very courteously; his Behaviour was very much like a Gentleman. Excuse was made for the Absence of the other thro' an Indisposition: And he was inform'd that we were *Englishmen*, come with a small Cargo to try how our Cloths would sell in *Gilan*, and to buy up Silk; that when we had made the Experiment, and should find it answer, we should then engage largely in the Trade, and probably some of us come and constantly reside here; and that it was fit that one us, who was a Seaman as well as Merchant, should come to view the *Caspian*; that we might the better know if it was safely navigable, and how far we might venture our Goods cross it; also to see if the present Vessels that now cross the *Caspian* were to be trusted, or whether we should be obliged to have Vessels of our own.

To which *Mustapha* reply'd, That the *Shach* was a great Encourager of Trade, and would no doubt favour our Design; and that we might depend on having all the Indulgence and Protection we could in reason desire; that he would immediately make a Report of us to the *Vizir Mulin* (that was his Name.) A Reception so favourable made us very easy. However we thought it necessary to wait on the *Vizir* as soon as possible; tho' the Journey to him would be a little expensive.

June 27th. Having provided ourselves with Horses, we set out for *Languaon*, a City about fifty Versts to the Eastward of *Reshd*, where the *Vizir* has a Country-Seat, and where the Heats are much more moderate than at *Reshd*. It was late

late in the Evening when we arrived at *Languaon*, so our Guide and Linguist, who is a *Persian*, carried us directly to the *Calenter*'s, who not being at home, his eldest Son receiv'd us very civilly. When he came in, he repeated the Compliments his Son had made us, and order'd Supper up: After we had eat we retired to our Room; the eldest Son came to us and brought two more *Persians* with him. We finding that they drank strong Liquors, and that the *Calenter* had excellent Lemon Juice, we treated them with Punch till midnight, at which time our Brandy was near at an end; we had not brought much with us, not expecting to find such merry Fellows among the *Persians*, *Nadir Shach* having on very severe Penalties forbid them the Use of spiritous Liquors, as well as the Juice of the Grape. One of the *Persians* sung us a great many Songs in his Language: He was reckon'd a great Proficient in Singing. He began so low one could scarce at first hear him, but as he proceeded he continu'd to raise his Voice, and before he had ended it might very well pass for Screaming, for we were almost deafened with the Noise: Yet our Linguist made an Excuse for him, and said, he never heard him perform so badly, for that when he was free from a Cold you might very well hear him at half a Mile Distance.

June 28th. About Sun-rise we waited on the *Vizir*, having sent our *Present* before us; for there is no appearing before a great Man in *Persia* for the first Time without a Present. He received us and our Present very kindly, bidding us welcome, and immediately Chairs were brought us to sit down. Our Linguist again inform'd him whom we were, and on what Account we came

 into

into *Persia*, and begged the Favour of his Protection. He answer'd us, That as we were Strangers, so he reckon'd us his Guests; and therefore had we not come about Business, it was his Duty to do all in his Power to serve us: That as to our Design, he would talk with us about it when he came to *Reshd*, and then he would forthwith make a Report of us to the *Shach*, who, he was assur'd, would not fail to favour it. He excused himself that he could not ask us to dine with him that Day, because he was to go immediately to *Reshd*; but he desired that we would tarry and rest ourselves with the *Calenter*, who would be very glad of our Company. So after having been treated by the *Vizir* with Coffee, Tea, and Sweetmeats, we retir'd to the *Calenter*'s. The House of the *Vizir*, according to the *Persian* Taste, is no mean one: It stood at the west End of a large oblong Court, which was enclos'd with a Wall a Quarter of a Mile in circuit; the Ground was not pav'd with Stones, but cover'd with a Green-sod. The east End of the House is one large Gallery, cover'd over head, in which is a Fountain that plays. We ascended to the Gallery by many Steps, so that it was rather in the middle Story above twenty Feet from the Ground; this gave it the Command of a vast extended Land-skip: The Prospect all the Way to the Eastward and the adjacent Country being finely interspers'd with Mountains, Woods, and Vales, nothing could be more delightful. At the farther End of the Gallery sate the *Vizir*, and on each Side of him, close to the Walls, sate on Carpets, on the Floor, several *Persians* of Note, smoaking out of their *Caullyons*, with their Legs under them,

them, and not across after the *Turkish* Manner, observing a profound Silence. The *Vizir* is about thirty five Years old, and has attain'd to the Command of 1000 Men, having a sort of *Colonel*'s Rank. In the Absence of the Governor the *Vizir* has a Guard of an hundred Men: These he had order'd to be drawn up on foot under the Gallery, in two single Lines facing each other, the Space of twenty Foot being betwixt each Line: This, no doubt, he intended as a noble Piece of Grandeur; but to us, who had seen *European* Guards, it appear'd a very mean Sight. We afterwards saw this Company frequently perform their Exercise by our House at *Reshd*. All their Disciplining, as far as we could perceive, was galloping away two or three together, and discharging their Pieces in full Speed, exactly after the Manner of the *Russ Cossacks*. Their Arms were old and aukward, with Match-locks; their Clothes, a white coarse Woolen Cloth, little better than what the *Russian* Boors make and wear.

We return'd to the *Calenter*'s, with whom we now began to be acquainted, and having our Rooms to ourselves we retir'd when we pleas'd. We occasion'd him more Guests than usual; perceiving that their Coming was chiefly to see us, we sate mostly in the publick Room, which was very handsome, and in the middle a Fountain playing. Among several other People of Note came three *Astrologers*, and with them three of their *Disciples*; the former were dress'd in White, with remarkable large white *Turbants* on their Heads, but their *Disciples* were dress'd in a common *Persian* Habit. The *Persians* are even to this Day great Lovers of *Astrology*, and pay a profound Re-

ſpect to the Profeſſors of it, relying much on their Predictions. All this we were well inform'd of, and therefore took care to ſhew them a particular Reſpect; and the more, as we verily believ'd they were ſent by the *Vizir* on purpoſe to give their Opinions of us: We hope they gave a favourable one, for our Linguiſt had unknown to us inform'd them that one of us was a Proficient in *Aſtronomy*, which was the Occaſion of the principal *Aſtronomer* to ſend a Preſent of a *Perſian Calendar*, very fairly written. The *Vizir* had order'd ſome of his People to go out and kill us a Deer, of which there are great Plenty in the neighbouring Mountains; at Noon they returned and brought a fine fat Buck. On this we ſupped, having din'd on the *Calenter*'s Proviſions. At Supper we were attended by Order of the *Vizir* with two *Perſian* Muſicians, who play'd on a ſort of Bag-pipes, that were very untunable and ſhrill; and this wretched Noiſe we were forc'd to commend, and, what was much worſe, endure it for ſome Hours.

Next Morning we took leave of the *Calenter*, and return'd to *Reſhd*. But it being pretty late, we ſuffer'd much from the Heat, and were both of us ſomething out of order, otherwiſe this would have been a very pleaſant Journey; for on all Sides of us were Groves of moſt ſort of Fruit-trees, and the Gardens abound with an infinite Number of *Water-Melons*, which were ripe at this Time. The vaſt Number of ſmall Trenches which convey running Water to the *Rice* Fields, yielded us a very refreſhing Sight in thoſe extream Heats, as well as frequently allay'd our Thirſt.

July

July 1ſt. This Afternoon we waited on the *Vizir*, and again related to him the End of our coming into *Perſia*: He being alone, we had much Diſcourſe with him; the Reſult of which was, that as to the Goods we now brought with us, he ſaid the *Shach*'s Merchant would buy them, and he could aſſure me, that he would give as much for them as any other; that if we pleas'd we might go to the *Shach* at *Meſched*, and negotiate our own Affairs; but, as we had intimated, waiting on the *Shach* ourſelves, did not ſuit at preſent with the Diſpoſition of our Affairs, he hinted, that if we would draw up a Petition, ſetting forth what Privileges we deſir'd, he would directly forward it to the *Shach*, who, he aſſured us, would grant a Decree in our Favour. It was not our Intentions to enter into any Negotiation this Year that might be the Occaſion of a Decree; but finding ſo fair an Opportunity offer itſelf, we thought it would be very imprudent to neglect it, tho' it ſhould coſt us a Sum of Money; and without conſiderable Expences it could not be expected. We farther conſider'd, if we refus'd to accept this Decree, or Grant, when it was ſo kindly offer'd to us, it would certainly render all that we had ſaid of ourſelves to be ſuſpected, and would give the *Armenians* an excellent Handle againſt us, who, we knew, would embrace every Opportunity to injure and diſappoint us: Beſides, as we found the *Perſian* Trade would very well anſwer, we concluded no Time ought to be loſt, but that we ought to prepare the Way to enter upon it as ſoon as poſſible; that our Friends would naturally expect this of us, who had favour'd our Journey hither,

and

and were determin'd to prosecute our Design and support us in it. In consequence of these Reflections we immediately embrac'd the *Vizir*'s Offer, and return'd him our Thanks for the Honour he did us, in proposing to espouse our Interest; that we would draw up a Petition as soon as possible, and lay it before him for his Approbation.

Having taken leave of the *Vizir*, we came to the *Shach*'s Merchant, who retir'd into the back Apartment, where we convers'd a long Time together. He enquir'd particularly about the Nature of our Trade; whether that Company of *English* Merchants which traded to *St. Peterburg* were the same that traded to *Isaphan* by way of the *East Indies*: We answer'd all his Questions, as we imagin'd, much to his Satisfaction, and afterwards inform'd him of the Conversation we had had with the *Vizir* just before, and of our Intention to send a Petition to the *Shach* at *Meshed* to crave his Protection and free Trade to his Dominions. He reply'd, we could not do better: As our Petition related to Trade, it would be referr'd to the *Shach*'s principal Merchant, who is his Treasurer and a Favourite. He said he would write particularly to his Master, the said principal Merchant, concerning us, and that he was ready to do us all the good Offices in his Power. We thank'd him; and added, that it would be of singular Advantage to us to have our Business speedily dispatch'd; if he would please to intimate the same to his Master he would do us a very great Favour, because our Stay would be but short, we intending to return by the next Vessel that sail'd for *Astracan*.

The

The next Day we drew up a Petition in *English*, which we got translated into the *Persian* Language, in the best Manner we could, which is as follows.

The Humble PETITION of the BRITISH Company of Merchants, *trading to the Empire of* RUSSIA.

I. THAT the said Company may have Leave freely to navigate the *Caspian*, and may at all Times sail to and from any of the Great *Shach*'s Ports on the *Caspian* with Merchandize without Restraint.

II. That the Company may at all Times import into any Part of the Great *Shach*'s Dominions, situate either in *Persia*, *India* or *Bokhara*, such Commodities and Manufactures as are the Product of *Great Britain*, or of any other Kingdom or Empire that may be found vendible in *Persia*, *India* and *Bokhara*, paying such Duty only on Importation as the Subjects of *Persia* usually pay. That they may be suffer'd to invest the Produce of such Merchandize as they shall import in Raw-Silk, or any other Commodity, the Product of the Great *Shach*'s Dominions, paying such Duty on Exportation only as the Subjects of *Persia* customarily pay.

III. That the Company may have Leave freely to hire or buy Houses or Ware-houses in any Part of the Great *Shach*'s Dominions; there to dispose of their Goods to the best Advantage, without being liable to pay any other Duty than what was first paid on Importation.

IV. That the Company may have all imaginble Protection for their Persons and Effects whilst they

they ſhall continue in the Great *Shach*'s Dominions, and Leave to depart thence freely at all Times, as their Occaſions may require.

V. That the Company will be ready at all Times to contract with the Great *Shach*'s Merchants for any Quantity of Cloth for the clothing the *Perſian* Army, or any other Uſe, the *Shach*'s Merchants delivering Proofs of ſuch Cloth, the Price they will receive them at, and the Quantity they want: That when the ſaid Cloths ſhall be imported according to Contract, if the *Shach*'s Merchants find any of them that do not come up to the Proof (or Pattern) they may reject them; but for thoſe they ſhall receive, to pay ready Money. That the Merchants may diſpoſe of thoſe Cloths that may be refus'd immediately, or when they think fit, in any Part of the Great *Shach*'s Dominions on the ſame Terms. The Company will be at all Times ready to contract with the *Shach*'s Merchants for any Quantity of any other Sort of Commodity. The Company hope no manner of Delay will be made on the Part of the *Shach*'s Merchants, in receiving Goods contracted for; and for all ſuch Goods as ſhall be accepted, they expect the Money to be paid them immediately on the Delivery of the Goods, otherwiſe the Company will be great Sufferers, as they can't elſe make Returns for ſuch Goods the ſame Year.

VI. That if the Company ſhall contract with private *Perſian* Merchants for any certain Quantity of Goods, and any Diſpute ſhall ariſe about the Delivery or Payment of the ſame, the Governor for the ſame Province to decide the Difference; but if the Company ſhall not chooſe to abide

abide by the Deciſion of the *Governor*, that then they may have Leave to appeal directly to the Great *Schah* himſelf.

VII. That the Company pay Duty on Goods, imported or exported, in the current Coin of *Perſia*: But if any of their Ships ſhall arrive at any other of the Great *Schah*'s Ports than *Reſhd*, and ſhall not be furniſh'd with *Perſian* Money enough to diſcharge the Duty of ſuch Goods as they import, then the Receiver of the Cuſtoms of ſuch Port ſhall take a Bill of Exchange on the Company's Houſe at *Reſhd* for the Amount of ſuch Duty.

VIII. That when the Company ſhall have paid Duty on Goods imported in ſuch Port as they ſhall be imported into, the ſaid Goods to be liable to no farther Duty on any Pretence whatſoever, altho' ſuch Goods are carried from thence into any other Part of the Great *Schah*'s Dominions.

IX. That Goods imported by the Company not for the *Schah*'s Uſe, but deſign'd to be ſold in the Inland Parts of his Dominions, may not be liable to be wholly unpack'd, but when viſited by the Cuſtom-houſe Officers only ſo far open'd as may ſatisfy them there is no Fraud deſign'd, but that the Contents of the Bales are ſuch as they were reported to be.

X. That the Company may have a Perſon appointed to attend them, that on Occaſion may be a Witneſs betwixt them and any Perſon they may contract with for, or ſell Goods to, or for any other ſuch Uſe.

We humbly crave Leave, that this our Buſineſs may be ſpeedily diſpatch'd that we may the ſooner return with our Report; and that if,

 through

through the ſmall Time allotted us to draw up this Petition, we may have forgot any material Articles, we humbly hope that we may obtain them the next Year.

Signed and Sealed { *J. E.* / *M. G.*

When this Petition was tranſlated we laid it before the *Vizir*, for his and the Court Merchants Approbation. They were pleas'd to find no Fault with it. At the ſame Time we inform'd them, we had nothing to accompany our Petition worth tendering the *Schah*, unleſs a Gold Repeating-Watch (which was a very curious one) might be thought ſo. They both view'd the Watch, and approv'd the ſending it; for delivering a Petition in *Perſia* without its being attended with a Preſent is impracticable, and indeed it is an Affront to attempt it. Having got our Petition fairly copy'd in the *Perſian* and in the *Engliſh* Languages, we deliver'd both Copies and Repeating-Watch to the * *Kupecheen*; likewiſe we ſent a plain Gold Watch to the *Schah*'s Favourite and Treaſurer. Theſe were forwarded the 4th of *July*, by the *Kupecheen*'s own Servant to *Meſhed*, where the young *Schah*, eldeſt Son of *Nadir Schah*, reſides and govern'd *Perſia* in his Father's Abſence in *India*.

On our Arrival at *Reſhd*, we found the Accounts that we had given us of the Affairs of *Perſia* whilſt we were at *Aſtracan* to be but too true, that the *Schah* by his *Kupecheens* (for he hath

* *Kupecheen*, or *Coopcheen*, a Court Merchant.

hath one or more in every City in *Perſia*) was become, in a manner, the ſole Merchant or Trader in all *Perſia*, as none but the *Schah*'s *Kupecheens* could buy any Goods imported: And as to Raw-Silk, not only the Product of the Province of *Gilan*, but of all the other Provinces that produce Silk, was wholly engroſs'd by the *Schah*. Hence we, amongſt the reſt, were oblig'd to tender our Goods to the *Schah*'s *Kupecheen*. Soon after that we had offer'd our Goods to him, he ſent ſeveral trading People of the City of *Reſhd* to view them, and enquire the Price, and in a few Days to give him an Account, or make their Report to him: The *Kupecheen* declares thereon the Price he will give for them; at the ſame time he let us know, that if we liked not the Price he offer'd for our Goods, we were free to carry them to any other Market in *Perſia*; that he wanted them not at an Under-Price, for at what the other Merchants valued them at, he was ready to give; more he could not anſwer. We have before obſerv'd, that our Goods were chiefly ſorted for *Meſched* and the Frontiers of *Bokhara*, and there we would fain have carried them; but then we ſhould not have been able to have come back from *Perſia* this Year; becauſe before we could have return'd from *Meſched* to *Reſhd* all the Veſſels deſign'd for *Aſtracan* would have been ſailed.

As the *Kupecheen* had offer'd us the Choice of all the Markets in *Perſia* to ſell our Goods at, and as this was a Favour he granted to none but ourſelves, we thought we ought not to deſpiſe it, but try if any other Merchant would give us a

a better Price than he offer'd us; therefore, after a Fortnight and more beating the Market, and finding no one would give us so much for the greatest Part of our Goods as the *Kupecheen* had bid us, we were forc'd to close with him as the best Customer; during which Time we had several *Persian* and *Armenian* Merchants came to view our Goods, with a Design to buy them, who were no ways influenced or awed by the *Kupecheen*. We met with one *Armenian* who was going to *Mesched*, and he bought Part of our Goods, and gave us considerably more than the *Kupecheen* had offer'd us; and on our sending to him he immediately gave us a Pass for those Goods.

The Province of *Gilan*, of which *Reshd* is the principal City, is well known to produce the best and greatest Quantity of Silk of any Province of *Persia*; but it is uncertain at present what Quantity it produces. The Silk-Works suffer'd much when *Peter* the Great took Possession of *Gilan*, as it occasion'd many of the *Persian* Boors to forsake their Habitations and neglect their Silk-Worms: This Injury *Gilan* has not yet recover'd. It is said, that the annual Duty paid on Silk in *Gilan*, for some Years last past, hath been only 5000 *Pood* *. Whereas it is evident, this Province must have produced a much greater Quantity every Year: This, they say, came to the *Schah*'s Knowledge, and occasion'd him to engross the Silk to himself this Year, more immediately with a View to know certainly what Quantity of Silk the Province did actually produce, than out of a Design to monopolize that Commodity and enhance its Price;

* *Pood*, or 35 *English* Pounds.

Price; for, according to the above Account, the Province of *Gilan* does not pay Duty on half the Silk it produces; and if the other Provinces act in the same Manner, then the *Schah* is deprived of more than half his Duty on Silk, and no Commodity pays so high a Duty as Silk, or brings so much Money into the *Schah*'s Treasury.

On the best and closest Enquiry we could make (for from what we have mention'd there can be no Reliance on the Custom-house Books) *Gilan* now produces not above 12000 *Pood per Annum*. About one half of this is consumed in *Persia*, and the rest is carried to the *European* Markets, thro' *Turkey* and *Russia*. Others say, that *Gilan* yields upwards of 15000 *Pood* of Silk; but we choose to believe the more moderate Report: Though it is certain the Silk-Works continue greatly to improve.

Since we have so often mention'd the Prohibitions in Trade, we shall briefly relate how they came to take place, as we were inform'd. As soon as *Nadir Schah* had declared his Son sole *Regent*, or reigning *Schah* of *Persia*, he chose for his Favourite a Merchant of *Ispahan*, and made him his Treasurer: This was a cunning enterprizing Man in the Vigour of his Age. It was natural for a Man of such a Cast of Mind to neglect no Occasion to enrich himself; and as one Means to do so, he fell upon this Project of engrossing to himself all the *European* Imports; of all which he, by his Agents, proposed to be the sole Buyer and Seller. To enable him to carry on this pernicious Project, he proposed to the young *Schah* to advance him a Million of * *Robles*, and

* A *Roble* is 4 *s.* 8 *d.* Sterling.

and to allow him this Privilege he was to pay Interest for this Sum at the Rate of 30 *per Cent. per Ann.* and to pay off the Principal in a certain Term of Years. Also at the same time he proposed the Monopoly of all the Raw-Silk in *Persia*, under Pretence of preventing all Frauds in the Duty of that Commodity. The young *Schah* granted the Favourite his Requests, extravagant as they were, and immediately thereupon his Servants were placed in all the great Cities of Trade, under the Name of the *Schah*'s *Kupecheens :* These Gentlemen enter'd on their Office about the Beginning of this Year 1739, and have in a manner put a Stop to all the Trade of *Persia*; particularly to that of the Province of *Gilan*, to which so many *Persian* and Foreign Merchants resort with Goods, and to buy up Raw-Silk.

This animated the People of *Reshd* to apply directly to the young *Schah* himself, and by their * *Calenter* boldly accuse his Favourite the Treasurer. They inform'd the *Schah*, That they were at any Time ready to part with their Lives and Fortunes to serve himself or Father; but as no Emergency of State laid them under such Hardships, they had nothing to complain of but the insatiable Avarice of the Treasurer in the new Regulations of Trade, so they humbly hoped they might find Redress and Relief from such an unreasonable Burthen. At this the *Schah* was mov'd, and ask'd the Treasurer how he dare venture to deceive him in an Affair of such Consequence, and project such destructive Schemes only to enrich himself? The Treasurer deny'd that it was to serve his own private Ends he enter'd

* *Calenter*, or Town-Clerk.

enter'd upon these Measures, but that he design'd the Profits of them for his Majesty's Use; and that his Projects did not lay the Province of *Gilan* under such Hardships as the *Calenter* represented; and that what he had advanced was a mere specious Pretence, he only taking this Opportunity of disobeying the *Schah*'s Orders; and that these were only Beginnings: Should the * *Chan* of *Gilan* and the *Calenter* be suffer'd thus to proceed with Impunity, his Majesty would soon find they would object against all the Orders he should send them; and that it was of his Authority, as *Schah*, they really complain'd, tho' they were loath to acknowledge it, and not of any Grievance his Projects had laid them under.

These Arguments so prevail'd on the *Schah*, (who, as young as he was, could not bear to hear of his Authority being despised) that he instantly order'd the *Chan* to be degraded, and the poor *Calenter* to be strangled. So the same Prohibitions on Trade are still continued, only with this Difference, that the *Vizir* now sees the Price set on those Goods the Merchants buy, and they pay for them, which has not in the least mended the Matter.

Hence it appears, that the *Schah*'s becoming the sole Buyer of all Goods was set on foot, and the Project of the Treasurer's, with no other View than to serve his own private Ends, and therefore it is to be hoped it won't last long; for it is of so monstrous a Kind, and such an intolerable Burthen and Perplexity on Trade, that its own Weight must soon destroy it. For supposing (what can never be expected) that the *Schah*'s Mer-

* Governor.

Merchants ſhould continue to give the ſame Price for all Goods imported as the *Perſian* private Merchants formerly gave, and ſhould ſell Silk at the ſame Price it was ſold to Foreigners formerly at, and continue to pay the *Boors* their uſual Price for it; yet would this Project thus cautiouſly managed be of pernicious Conſequence to *Perſia*, conſidering how many thouſand petty Traders and Shop-Keepers would thereby be totally undone and ſet a-ſtarving, all whoſe Profits muſt now center in the *Schah*. Theſe heretofore got a comfortable Subſiſtence by buying ſome of them a Bale of Cloth or two, and other Goods, which they retail'd out; which ſort of Employment much ſuits the *Perſians*: But now the *Schah* himſelf, by his Agents, ſells by the Meaſure or Ell; and as the other Retailers muſt firſt buy out of the *Schah*'s Ware-houſes, ſo it can't be ſuppos'd they can any way find their Account in retailing at ſuch a Diſadvantage, and conſequently muſt ſhut up their Shops.

It is certain, the *Schah* muſt know better than to continue Prohibitions, which, tho' never ſo prudently managed, muſt yet prove fatal to ſo vaſt a Number of his trading Subjects, and in the End deſtroy all the Trade of *Perſia*. The Difficulty is, the Danger that attends the ſetting the *Schah* right in this Matter, as appears from the Diſgrace of the *Governor* and the Fate of the poor *Calenter* of *Reſhd* ſo lately. This Scheme ſeems calculated to impoveriſh the *Perſian* Merchants; for it is the ſame thing to a Foreigner to ſell his Goods, and to buy *Perſian* Goods of the *Schah*'s Merchants as the *Perſian* private Merchants, provided he can do it on the ſame Terms the *Schah*'s Merchants, and muſt deal

deal nearly on the ſame, or they will ſoon ceaſe to trade with them. If they attempt to beat down the Price of foreign Commodities, and raiſe the Price of Silk, it can only ſerve their Turn but once, and another Year no Foreigners will ſend them any Goods, or come to buy any; and the Conſequence will be, the *Kupecheens* will have little to do. It is generally believed the young *Schah* will be better informed, there being thoſe about him, that at a proper Time will venture to ſet him right about this Affair. That he is ready to redreſs Grievances, and encourage Trade, we could produce ſeveral Inſtances; witneſs the Decree or Order he ſo readily granted us, and that, it is ſaid, he lately granted to the *Armenians*, which impowers them to carry their Goods to any Market in *Perſia*, without regard to the *Schah*'s *Kupecheens*, that it is to be hoped the Treaſurer's Projects are near at an end.

Indeed as to the Quantity of Silk the Province produces, there's the higheſt Reaſon the *Schah* ſhould be ſatisfied therein. Now this could not be done ſo eaſily as by engroſſing all the Silk for a Year or two; and it is no new Thing, and has been done before more than once.

In order to the better underſtanding the Affairs of *Perſia* with regard to Trade, 'tis neceſſary we ſhould briefly relate what is here told us of *Nadir Schah*, who is the famous *Kouli Kan*; who when he depoſed the late *Schah*, (of the ancient *Schahs* of *Perſia*) and aſcended the Throne about four Years ſince, took on himſelf the Title of *Schah*, and Name of *Nadir*, which ſignifies *Wonderful*. As ſoon as he had ſeated himſelf

ſelf firmly on the *Perſian* Throne, and made Peace with the *Turks*, he proceeded on the *India* Expedition. At the ſame he eſtabliſhed his eldeſt Son, *Riſa Kuli Mirza*, ſole Regent of the *Perſian* Empire, commanding all the *Khans*, or Governors of Provinces, to regard his Son, and not himſelf, as reigning *Schah* of *Perſia*; accordingly he has ever ſince governed *Perſia*, and continued ſo to the Time his Father returned from *India*. It is about 18 Months ſince *Nadir Schah* took *Candahar*, which is eſteemed the Key of the *Indies* on the North, and as ſuch had been ſtrongly fortify'd and garriſon'd by the *Mogul*. It was likewiſe as well defended, for it coſt *Nadir Schah* a Siege of eight Months to reduce it; which having done, and ſettled his Affairs on that Side, he marched directly forward into *India*, took *Lahor*, and ſeveral other Cities, before the Great *Mogul* came in Perſon to oppoſe him, and put a Stop to his Victories. Not far from the City of *Dalhi*, the two royal Armies met, and here a very lucky Accident fell out which favoured *Nadir Schah*: the greateſt Part of the *Mogul*'s Army was under the Influence of a certain *Raja*, who commanded as Field-Marſhal under the Great *Mogul*. The *Raja* being not on good Terms with the Great *Mogul*, on a ſudden deſerts him, and drew off thoſe Troops that adhered to him, leaving his Prince with much the ſmaller Part of the Army, which yet much out-numbered the Enemy. The *Perſian Nadir* apprized of this lucky Accident, did not fail to make the beſt uſe of it; and therefore inſtantly obliged the *Mogul* to give him Battle. In the Fight, the *Perſians* put the *Mogul*'s Army wholly to the Rout. The Great *Mogul* fled, and unhappily

happily ſhut himſelf up in *Dalhi*, or *Jonabat*, as it is called, which the *Nadir* preſently inveſted, and ſoon carried it by Storm. Here again the *Mogul* fled, but in vain; for being cloſely purſued he fell into the Hands of the *Perſians*, and was made Priſoner.

It is generally reported, that as ſoon as *Nadir Schah* heard of the Great *Mogul*'s being in his Poſſeſſion, he ſent his youngeſt Son in great Pomp to meet him, and conduct him to the Camp; where when he arrived, the *Schah* treated him with all the Reſpect due to a Royal Priſoner, and ſeated the *Mogul* cloſe by himſelf, and obliged him to diſpatch all the Affairs of *India* as if he had been ſtill a free Prince reigning as before, without any Controul. That after having agreed on certain Terms with the Great *Mogul*, and ſettled the Boundaries of each Empire, he re-inſtated him in the Poſſeſſion of the *Indies*, and began his March back for *Candahar* and the *Bokhara*'s. The *Nadir* immediately had this Battle and Victory proclaimed over all the Empire of *Perſia*, with the Account of the *Mogul* being his Priſoner. Although it is difficult to come at the Truth of State Affairs in theſe arbitrary Countries, yet they do venture to ſay, that the young *Schah* had cut off the whole Race of the ancient *Schahs* of *Perſia*; for *Nadir Schah* left the depoſed *Schah* alive, and all his Family, in his Son's Poſſeſſion, when he left *Perſia* and marched to *India*; and this, ſome think, was the firſt Step the young *Schah* took to ſecure to himſelf the Crown of *Perſia*.

There was a Decree publiſh'd in *Nadir Schah*'s Name, dated immediately after his Succeſſes in *India*, by which he exempts all his *Perſian* Sub-

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jects from Taxes for the enſuing three Years. The young *Schah*, during the Abſence of his Father, took the City of *Baulk*, and ſecured the Frontiers of *Bokhara*, clearing them from the *Uſbeck*'s and *Turcoman Tartars*, who uſed ſo much to infeſt the Frontiers of *Khoraſan*, the Province in which the City of *Meſched* is ſituated. There's a Report, that when *Nadir Schah* was at *Iſpahan*, about five Years ſince, (which the *Joulfa Armenians* aſſure us was the Occaſion of their being obliged to leave that Place) he ſent for the *Engliſh* Agent, and enquired of him the Nature, *&c.* of the *Engliſh* Trade, to all which the Agent gave ſatisfactory Anſwers. But theſe *Joulfa's* having afterwards inſinuated to the *Schah*, that the Subjects of *Perſia* were denied free Trade to *England*, which yet the *Britiſh* Subjects enjoyed in *Perſia*, he again ſent for the *Engliſh* Agent, who when he came was not able to clear up this Point, why *Perſian* Subjects were denied Trade in *England*, to the *Schah*'s Satisfaction, and therefore was ordered to leave *Iſpahan*. But a *French* Miſſionary, who was then at *Reſhd*, allows the former Part of this Story, but denies the *Engliſh* were forced to leave *Iſpahan*. He ſays, the Agent told the *Schah*, that if he would not be pleaſed to allow the Arrears due to the *Engliſh* Company on account of the Duties of *Ormus*, half of which had been allotted them (for Money due to them out of the *Schah*'s Treaſury) that he ſhould be obliged to retire out of his Dominions, and carry the Company's Goods to other Markets; that the *Schah* giving this Agent no Redreſs in this Affair, the Agent of his own Accord retired from *Iſpahan*; but that they may return when they pleaſe, and that

that they now keep up their Houſe there, where their Broker and Interpreter now lives. He added the following unlucky Circumſtances: An *Engliſh Eaſt-Indiaman* riding at *Bender Abaſſe*, in the *Perſian* Gulph, a *Perſian* General ſeeing the Ship ride there, and being informed ſhe had Money on board, ſent and demanded a round Sum; but the Commander of her let the *Khan* know he would part with no Money on any account; on this the General ordered his Boats to board the Ship, and take it by Force, which they endeavoured to do; but not being acquainted with this ſort of Work, the Fire from the Ship preſently ſunk ſeveral of their Boats, and drowned many of the People. This made them ſoon deſiſt, and the *Khan* was forced to continue his March without the Money. About the ſame Time there were two *Engliſh* Veſſels riding at *Buſſora*, which City is in the Poſſeſſion of the *Turks*, but was cloſely beſieged by the *Perſians*. The *Turks* ſome-how ſurpriſed and got Poſſeſſion of theſe two Veſſels, and having mann'd them with *Turks*, made uſe of them very ſucceſsfully againſt the *Perſians*; after which they returned them to the *Engliſh*. In this Action the *Perſian* General happened to be killed by the Fire from the *Engliſh* Veſſels. The ſucceeding Commander ſent Advice of this to the *Schah*, alledging, this Misfortune was wholly owing to the Aſſiſtance the *Engliſh* had given the *Turks*, informing alſo of the Affair at *Bender Abaſſe*. At this News the *Schah* was exceeding angry; for the General that was killed was a brave Man, and one of the *Nadir*'s principal Favourites. The *Schah* ſent immediately to the *Engliſh* Agent, then at *Bender Abaſſe*, to demand the Reaſons for

for these extravagant Proceedings; to all which the Agent gave reasonable Excuses. The Affair was passed over soon after *Nadir Schah* made Peace with the *Turks*, and began his March to *India*. Notwithstanding these Circumstances, it is our Opinion, that neither of them were the Occasion of the *English* Agent's retiring from *Ispahan*; but that it is more likely the civil Broils then subsisting, and the unsettled State of *Persia*, made them in Prudence to withdraw themselves and their Effects from thence. Besides, the *Schah* had in a manner deserted *Ispahan*, his Son having established his Residence at *Mesched*, or *Mushad*. Although the *English* might now safely reside at *Ispahan*, the Storm that they dreaded being now blown over; yet, as they can't but know that the Trade from thence is now wholly transferr'd to *Mesched*, it would not be worth their while to return there again, or send any more Goods. This is confirmed by all People indifferently, who have lately come from *Ispahan*, who tell us, that it is almost drain'd of Inhabitants. Although the *Hollanders* have still their Agent and House there, yet the Goods they sell are so inconsiderable, that it is thought they'll soon leave that City.

The *Ispahan* Trade ought greatly to have answer'd formerly; the Expences of the *English* Agent being so very great, he living with the Grandeur of a little Prince. We were told by one who had the Charge of the Stables of one of these Agents, that he had commonly three Hundred Horses, Mules, and Camels in his Stables, not one third of which were used to bring or carry Goods; but they were chiefly kept for the use of the Agent's Family. The same

same Person related, that about 30 Years since, the then reigning *Schah* of *Persia* did the *English* Agent the Honour of a Visit, who, to shew the *Schah* a singular Instance of Respect, cover'd the Road from the Court to the *English* House, near a Mile in Length, with Scarlet Cloth; which after the *Schah*'s Return, was left for the Populace. *Olearius* tells us, that the *English* Agent then in *Ispahan*, treated the *Holstein* Ambassador with a Magnificence which was equalled by no one, save the *Schah* himself. A long Time afterwards the *English* had great Interest at the Court of *Persia*; and if they han't continued to have the same, it must be intirely owing to the Neglect or Mismanagement of the Servants of the *East-India* Company. But these grand Proceedings redounded more to the Honour of the Nation, than to the Profit of the Company; since the *Hollanders* at the same time enjoy'd the same Privileges, and maintained themselves in them at so much less Expence. Whilst we have been here at *Reshd* we have taken all imaginable Pains to inform ourselves of the Trade of these Parts of *Persia*, but we find it very difficult to get a right Information. The *Persian* Merchants are shy and reserved, and will not enter presently into an Acquaintance. As for the *Armenians*, we durst not depend too far on their Intelligence, except two or three, of whose Veracity we have had sufficient Proofs. The Trade at *Ispahan* is now at its lowest ebb, and as the *English* have already done, so must all the rest of the foreign Merchants shortly abandon it; yet this Trade is not lost, only transplanted to the City of *Mesched*. The *Persians* are still in the same want of the foreign Commodities as formerly,

ly, and ſtill under the ſame Neceſſity of ſelling, or bartering away the Surplus of their own.

Iſpahan owed its Wealth and Grandeur wholly to the Reſidence of the *Perſian* Court there, and its Decline muſt neceſſarily follow on the *Schah*'s withdrawing himſelf and Court, and giving the Preference to another City; ſo that *Meſched* is now become what *Iſpahan* was, the Metropolis of the *Perſian* Empire, and there the Trade of *Perſia* muſt now center. But even without ſuch a powerful Addition, as the *Schah*'s Reſidence there muſt give to the Trade of *Meſched*, it was before a City of as large Extent, and Number of Inhabitants, as any one in *Perſia*, except *Iſpahan* itſelf, and this chiefly from its happy Situation in the Neighbourhood of the *Bokhara's*.

Muſhad is very famous in the moſt ancient Hiſtories of theſe Parts, having more than once, when ſhe enjoyed a *Khan*, or ſovereign Prince of her own, been Miſtreſs of a great Part of *Perſia*, as well as both the *Bokhara*'s. She is now reſtored to her former Dignity, if ſhe has not exceeded it. *Riza Kuli Mirza*, as well as *Nadir Schah*, do all they can to aggrandize it; they have endowed it with Privileges greater than *Iſpahan* ever enjoyed, and uſe all poſſible Means to encourage and invite Foreigners and trading People to come and reſide there. *Nadir Schah* thus favours *Muſhad*, as it is the principal City of the Province of *Khoraſan*, in which he was born, or in *Calot*, which is in the Neighbourhood.

The Seat of Trade in the *Perſian* Empire being thus far removed, the Market can't be now commodiouſly, if at all, ſupplied with foreign Commodities by the ſame *Canal*, which furniſhed it;

it; this gives a favourable Opportunity to thoſe who are inclin'd to ſupply it by a better. *Meſched* is but eight or nine Days Journey, by Poſt, from *Reſhd*, and not a Month for a Caravan; and from the Port of *Aſtrabat* not half ſo long: ſo that the *Britiſh* Merchants can't deſire a more inviting Occaſion than the preſent Juncture, to enter into the *Perſian* Trade, whilſt *Meſched*, its Seat, is near the *Caſpian*, and adjacent to the Province of *Gilan*, in the Product of which their Return muſt be made. But ſhould Fortune again abandon *Meſched*, and the *Perſian* Monarch deſert her, yet it will never be the Intereſt of the *Britiſh* Merchants ſo to do, as they will always find their Account to eſtabliſh their principal Mart at *Meſched*; here they'll be always at hand to ſupply the Demand of the *Bokhara*'s, which can be no otherwiſe ſupply'd than by the way of *Perſia*. From *Siberia* the *Ruſſians* can't croſs the Deſert, or *Step*, to *Bokhara*, on account of the *Calmucks*, and as it would be ſo tedious, and almoſt an impracticable Journey; nor have they ever attempted, or can they at preſent from * *Oranberg*, or any other City, or Settlement on the River *Yoick*, croſs the *Step* to *Bokhara*, without infinite Hazard: Neither can the *Bokhara*'s be ſupply'd by the way of the *Eaſt-Indies*, as they lie ſo far inland; therefore the *Bokharans* can be ſupply'd with *European* Commodities no other way than by *Meſched* only. Could the *Britiſh* Merchants once well eſtabliſh themſelves in the

* A new *Ruſſian* Fortreſs on the Frontiers towards *Bokhara*.

Trade of the *Bokhara*'s, for which the Northern Provinces of *Persia* would yield proper Returns, they might rest contented, and let who will supply the Southern Provinces of *Persia*. For who consider the vast Extent of both the *Bokhara*'s, the Kingdom of *Tibet*, and *Tangut*, and the great Tract of Land which lies to the South-East of them, and at the same time know that they contain so many great and populous Cities, in which *European* Commodities are in the highest Demand, must conclude a very advantagious Trade might be settled on that Side, and might be almost infinitely extended. Nor is it in the least to be doubted, that were such a Trade once established, there would be found in those Parts other Commodities than Gold and coloured * Stones, to invest our Returns in for *Europe*, should those and the Product of *Gilan* be not thought sufficient. That the *English* may possess themselves of this Trade, with a certain View of considerable Profit, whensoever they please, is so evident, that it would be ridiculous to go about to prove it, because they can have no Rivals in it; they have nothing to do but to send their Goods to *Petersburg*, and from thence to be forwarded to *Astracan*, from thence cross the *Caspian* to *Astrabat*, from thence to *Mesched*, from which City all the *Persian* and *Bokharan* Demands would be supply'd; and this would be equally as easy and safe, as sending Goods from *London* to *Petersburg*, and we esteem more so, as we think from Experience that the Navigation of the *Caspian* is less subject to Danger than that of the *Baltick*, if

* Rubies, Saphires, &c.

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navigated with fit and proper Vessels; for even now, with the indifferent Vessels of the *Russians*, and more indifferent Seamen, very few ill Accidents attend them, except a Vessel belonging to a *Russ* Merchant, which winter'd at *Reshd*, and sail'd from thence in *May*, with some Goods to *Baku* and *Derbent*; she was the rest of the Summer in finding her way to the Entrance of the *Volga*. Hence appears the Necessity of the *British* Merchants having their own Vessels, and the greatest Part *British* Seamen, that they may be able to command their own Time and Ports.

Gilan Silk, for this two or three Years past, has been much dearer than heretofore, occasioned from the Silk of the City *Ganges* and *Shamaky* having failed, the former having been slightly visited with the Plague, and the other with the *Lesginsky Tartars*, and *Nadir Schah*; the *Tartars* first plundered and destroyed the Country, and the *Schah* having demolished old *Shamaky*, obliged the Inhabitants to build them a new City, some few Versts from the Ruins of the old. But as the *Persian Boors* of the northern Provinces find great Profit in raising Silk-Worms, and make it their principal Care, so it's not to be doubted but those Countries will soon overcome these Injuries, as the *Ganges* has already, there being Silk in great Plenty at a reasonable Price. That City hath now for above this two Years been free from the Plague. As for the Security the Merchants have for their Persons and Effects, they are ever liable to the Restraints of Princes, but not more here than in any Part of *Europe*, as appears by the *East-India* Company retiring with their Goods from *Ispahan* unmolested, even in the worst of Times,

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when there was a Revolution, and they were under the Displeasure of *Nadir Schah*, the Necessity of whose Affairs at that Juncture might have tempted him to have sequestred their Money and Effects. The *Indians* also who reside in *Persia* (of which there are great Numbers) are exempt from all Plundering or Imposition whatsoever, altho' it's now not above three Years since the *Schah* has been engaged in a War with the Great *Mogul*, their Sovereign. The *Armenians* indeed the *Schah* has now and then made free with, raising considerable Sums of Money on them; but these are Subjects of *Persia*, who, according to the Custom of all arbitrary Governments, are treated at the Will and Pleasure of their Prince, yet at the same time he never laid a Restraint on their Effects in Trade. And although the *Schah*'s Merchant was this Year the only Buyer in all *Gilan*, and bought the whole Quantity of Goods they had, yet he did not abate them three *per Cent.* on their Cloth less than what they had sold it for to the *Persian* private Merchants the last Year; and for their other Goods he gave them reasonable Prices; which shews the *Schah* is cautious of distressing even the * *Armenians*, in the way of Trade, which makes his *Coopcheen* very careful in avoiding giving them just Cause of Complaint against him. Not long since *Nadir Schah*'s own Brother attempted to oppress the trading People in order to raise a Contribution to himself, which coming to the *Schah*'s Ears, he was so exceeding angry at it, it had near cost him his Head.

* The *Armenians* are looked on here as *Jewish* Subjects are in some *Christian* Countries.

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We could give many more Instances of his Favour to his trading Subjects, but to prevent being tedious we avoid it. That the *British* Merchants may be assured of the same Indulgence as other foreign Merchants in *Persia*, or to be preferr'd before them, there's all the Reason to expect, because no other Merchants can supply the N.E. part of *Persia*, with those Commodities most in Demand, at so easy a Price, or can afford to give so much for their Silks. This all the *Armenians* and *Persians* are well acquainted with, which alarms the former, and makes the latter our Friends. Of this we shall give this particular Instance. As soon as we had informed the *Schah*'s principal Merchant of our Design to petition his Majesty, he called together all the chief of the Merchants in *Reshd* to hold a Conference with them: the Question he propos'd was, Which deserved the greatest Encouragement, the *English* or the *Armenian* Merchants? When it was unanimously determined in our Favour. This we were informed of both from the *Persians* and *Armenians* who were at the Debate.

Since the *Schah*'s Court has been removed from *Ispahan* to *Mesched*, the Market of the latter has been but scantily supply'd with *European* Commodities, therefore they are desirous to give us the greatest Encouragement to come to *Mesched*, well knowing this Market can be no otherways well furnish'd than by the *English* Merchants through the Empire of *Russia*, the Empress of which hath a Consul and a Minister at *Ispahan*. Hence it comes that there are going and returning all the Summer *Russ* Vessels, which carry Dispatches to and from *Astracan* to *Reshd*, which

which Veſſels or * Packet-boats, belong to her *Czarian* Majeſty, in one of which we came over, and the ſame way intend to return, we having a very intimate Correſpondence and Friendſhip with the Conſul.

Auguſt 11. We had intended to have left *Reſhd* this Week, and a *Dutch* Servant, with about 1000 Rubles worth of Effects, to be inveſted in Silk, and to have follow'd us the firſt Opportunity; but the *Coopcheen* told us, the Money was ready for our Effects when we pleas'd to take it, but that he was much ſurpris'd to hear we intended to leave *Perſia* before the Decree we petition'd for was granted us, which he was certain would not be long before it arriv'd; that he apprehended that the *Vizir* could not anſwer to let us return before the Decree ſhould arrive, or until he ſhould receive particular Inſtructions how to act concerning us. This new and ſurprizing Diſcourſe alarm'd us, that we reſolv'd to go directly to the *Vizir*, with whom we remonſtranced, that our Intentions were to return in her *Czarian* Majeſty's Packet, that would ſail in about a Week. After ſome Conſideration he made Anſwer, that it ſeem'd ſtrange to him, that we ſhould propoſe to leave *Perſia* without an Anſwer to our Petition, when he had aſſur'd us, that we might expect a Decree in our Favour, and that we ſhould return and leave undone the principal Thing for which we ſaid we came here, when we might ſo eaſily obtain it. He confeſs'd he was at a Loſs to reconcile this with the reſt of

* The laſt Packet-boat ſails for *Aſtracan* about the latter end of *Auguſt*, and none after till the next Spring.

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our Behaviour, which hitherto had given intire Satisfaction. He feared that we muſt lately have taken ſome Diſguſt at the Country, which made us thus ſuddenly reſolve to return and leave our Affairs unfiniſh'd. This might proceed from ſome Inſinuation of the *Armenians*, whom he wiſh'd we would not give too much Credit to; or if we had not met the Honours we expected, he was very ſorry for it. He added, he ſhould have been to have waited on us himſelf, and invited us to have been his Gueſts, but that he had ſcarce Time to diſpatch the *Schah*'s Buſineſs, which had prevented him in both. To this we replied, that we returned him Thanks for the many Favours that we had received from him, which were more than we could have expected, and as many as we could deſire; that as to the *Armenians* we converſed but very little with them, and that they had no Influence on us ſo as to forward or retard our Return; that could we have had the Honour to have carried back with us the *Schah*'s Decree, it would have been a ſingular Happineſs; that we had now tarried twice the Time he was pleaſed to intimate the Decree would arrive in; and that as ſo great a Monarch as the *Schah* could not but have infinite Buſineſs of more moment, we fear'd our Petition might be eſteemed a Matter of private Concern; it might be a long Time before it came to be read or conſider'd, at leaſt ſo as to obtain an Anſwer; and the more Cauſe we had to fear it, was, as we had no Friend at Court to ſollicit for us; and that ſhould the *Schah* condeſcend to grant a Decree in our Favour, we ſhould leave a fit Perſon, who belong'd to us, to receive it, and proceed directly with it

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to *Peterſburg*; that we flatter'd ourſelves this would be permitted us, as our Orders were to return this *Autumn*, and on no account whatſoever to winter in *Perſia*, and we dare not act contrary to our Inſtructions, which were poſitive. All this we begg'd the *Vizir* to conſider, and not inſiſt on our tarrying for the Decree, which could as well come after us; whereas ſhould we be obliged to tarry for it, we ſhould act contrary to poſitive Orders, and loſe a whole Year's time.

Upon this the *Vizir* pauſed ſome time, and conſulted with his Deputy *Muſtapha* and others, who attended on him, and made Anſwer, That one of us ſurely might tarry, and do Honour to the *Schah*'s Decree, which he was certain would arrive in a ſhort Time, and that the other might return, and make a Report of our Affairs. We told him, that as this Propoſal was intirely new, we could make no immediate Anſwer, but deſir'd that we might have Time to conſider of it, and we would return him our Anſwer in the Evening.

When we came home we conſulted with ourſelves, and finding that there was an abſolute Neceſſity that one of us ſhould ſtay, and, according to the *Perſian* Expreſſion, do Honour to the Decree by the Manner of receiving it, we reſolved, that Mr. *Graham* ſhould tarry here. On this we ſent the *Vizir* Word by our Linguiſt, as we had promis'd, and the next Morning waited on him ourſelves, and told him, that Capt. *Elton* came to take his Leave of him. After ſome Conſultation with thoſe about him, he aſk'd, Why he would not be ſo kind as to tarry with them for the Decree? Our Anſwer was, That if Mr. *Graham* returned, he could only make

made Report of Affairs of Trade, and could give no ſatisfactory Account of the *Caſpian*, on which the Succeſs of our future Deſigns ſo much depended, and to which End Mr. *Elton*, as a Seaman, was particularly ſent; and that if one of us ſhould return, our Principals would on that Account undoubtedly expect it ſhould be him; and it would be but a poor Excuſe to write them word that he was detain'd here againſt his Will. He evaſively made anſwer, That when the *Decree* did arrive, it would be directed to Mr. *Elton*, and could be deliver'd to none elſe. This look'd ſo like Artfice to detain him, that his Deſign ſo to do was very plainly ſeen, that it was in vain to uſe many Words; that our Reply was, We would conſider of it, and give him our Anſwer in a few Hours. We return'd home not very well pleaſed, not knowing what the *Vizir*'s Meaning could be in proceeding with us in this Manner, ſo we immediately ſent for an *Armenian* or two, in whom we knew we could confide, and enquired of them concerning the *Vizir*'s Conduct towards us; they ſaid, it was not in the *Vizir*'s Power to let Mr. *Elton* return until ſuch Time the *Decree* we had petition'd for ſhould arrive, or at leaſt an Anſwer to our Petition; for if the *Schah* ſhould condeſcend to grant us a *Decree*, the Courier that ſhould bring it would deliver it to none but Mr. *Elton*, to whom it would moſt certainly be addreſs'd; that if the Courier could not readily find him, he would demand him of the *Vizir*, and if he could not produce him, he would carry the *Decree* back, and make his Report accordingly; or it might happen, that an Order would be ſent for Mr. *Elton* to come to

 the

the *Schah* at *Mesched*. In either Case it would be very unlucky for the *Vizir* if he was not to be found, as Mistakes of this kind in *Persia* are seldom forgiven. Being convinced that these were the true Reasons for detaining Mr. *Elton*, made us something easier, tho' we were well assured (which gave us no little Concern) that his being obliged to winter there would be of great Prejudice to our future Designs, and would probably postpone them a Year. However, as his Stay was absolutely necessary, we waited on the *Vizir* the same Evening, and told him, since he was so desirous that Capt. *Elton* should tarry to do Honour to the *Schah*'s *Decree*, we were content; but that if our Principals should send no Goods next Year, or should refuse to enter on the Trade on account of the Captain's being detain'd, he would not reflect on us, but take the Blame to himself; but that we hoped, that after the *Decree* was arrived the Captain should not be detain'd an Hour. He promised he would not keep him a Moment; and that if no Opportunity should then present for him to cross the *Caspian*, he would immediately dispatch him by Post, and give Mr. *Graham* a Convoy quite to the *Russian* Frontiers, all at the *Schah*'s Expence. On this Mr. *Graham* took leave of the *Vizir*, and prepar'd for his Return to *Petersburg*; but on the 15th of *August* the New Governor of *Gilan* made his Entry into *Reshd*. We did not wait on him the same Day, as we knew he would not have Time to talk with us; and as it's necessary, according to Custom, to send him some Present. At the same time we heard a Courier was come from *Mesched*, who

who enquired for the *English* Merchants; about Noon the Courier came with the *Decree* the *Schah* was pleased to grant us: We were obliged to meet him at the outer Door of our Court-Yard, when he deliver'd it, Capt. *Elton* with some Ceremony, taking it in both his Hands, touching his Forehead with it; and the Captain was obliged to receive it in the same Manner, and do it the same Obeysance.

In the Evening our Acquaintance came to congratulate us on receiving the *Decree*; though we believe none of them thought that we should ever obtain it. According to their Custom, we presented the Courier who brought the *Decree* with a compleat *Persian* Habit, which he wore all the Time he staid at *Reshd* in Honour of us: When our Servant deliver'd him the Habit, he forced him to accept of three Gold Ducats, which the Servant by our Order refusing, he told him he would not accept of it on any other Terms, so he was obliged to take the Money. The *Decree* translated is as followeth.

OUR high Commandment consists in this, That we have condescended to grant the underwritten Petitioners the Contents of their humble Petition. And by this be it known unto you, most excellent *Beglerbeys*, most honourable Governors and Commanders of our Empire of all *Irah* (which resembles *Paradise*) our Country of *Baulk* and its Dependencies: Whereas some honourable *English* Merchants have arriv'd here from the Empire of *Russia*, we have given them Liberty, and hereby allow them to land their Goods with all Freedom in all, or any of our Ports on the *Caspian* Sea, and from

 thence

thence to carry them to any Market in our Empire, particularly to our Provinces of *Khorasan*, *Irak*, *Farse*, *Vaussier*, *Bodshaun*, *Vized*, *Kerman*, *Baulk*, *Andiboad Shabran*, and to the Bank of the River *Ama*, and to the Confines of *Badagshan*, *Cabul*, *Caswin*, *Pstagne*, to the Empire of *India*, and the Banks of the River *Attukau*; and that they shall be permitted and indulged to pursue their Journeys with their Merchandise without the least Interruption or Disturbance, we having order'd all our Subjects to give them all reasonable Assistance. And when they have determin'd at any Port or Place to open their Goods, and expose them to Sale, they may at all times do so without Interruption, and what remains unsold they are left at Liberty to carry or transport where they please, in Vessels or in Loads; only such Duties as are customary shall be taken, and by no Means any more shall be exacted from them. If these *English* Merchants desire to buy up any Commodities of our Empire for Exportation, they shall meet with no manner of Hindrance; but they shall find the same Indulgence as any other Merchants whatsoever. When their Vessels or Goods happen to arrive at any Place, where there shall be no *English* House, or Consul, if they have no Inclination to land their Goods, no Force shall be used to oblige them to land them, or shall they on any Pretence be detain'd, paying the ordinary Duty, and taking a Receipt for the same. If it should so fall out, that they have no Money ready to pay the Duty on the Goods they shall import into any other Port than *Reshd*, then they may give their Assignment on their House at *Reshd*. If they shall have Occasion

sion to buy or hire Vessels for the carrying of or bringing on Shore their Goods, the Commanders of our Ports are commanded to give them all manner of Assistance herein. If these Merchants desire to sell their Goods out of their own Quarters, Houses, or Warehouses, We give them full Power so to do, and let none have the Assurance to interrupt them, under Pretence their Goods have not been regularly view'd by the Custom-house Officers. But at the same time we expect, that they will not offer Goods to Sale which have not paid Duty, or been regularly view'd at our Custom-house, to the Injury of our Revenues. If the *English* Merchants desire to hire or buy Houses in *Reshd*, or any other Port or Place, in that we shall give them all reasonable Assistance; allowing, however, the Inhabitants of such Places their Liberty, none of which shall be constrain'd to part with their Houses against their Inclination; and they shall treat the *English* with all imaginable Civility and Respect.

If any of the Goods they shall import shall be thought proper for our Use by our Commissaries, such may be taken for us at the same Price they shall be sold to other People for, our Commissaries paying ready Money; and they shall not be oblig'd to part with, or deliver any Goods but for ready Money: And in such Payments let none dare to give them any Trouble, on pain of our highest Displeasure. Whatsoever Goods they shall import that shall not be thought proper for our Use, they have free Liberty to sell them to whom they please, without Hindrance or Delay, and these the *English* Merchants have

have Leave to ſhip off, or to carry them to what Place they chooſe.

If any Differences happen in their Trade, and it come to a Trial, or Hearing, the *Commanders* of that Place are order'd to give immediate Sentence without Partiality. In whatſoever Port the *Engliſh* Merchants ſhall pay their Duty, there they ſhall have given them a written Diſcharge, in which ſhall be ſet forth, for what Quantity of Goods they have paid Duty, and the Amount of the ſaid Duty, that they may not be liable to pay Duty for them again in any Port or Place. The Cuſtomhouſe Officers are not to break open or unpack their Bales, but to take the Merchant's Words for the Content of them, that they may ſuſtain no Damage.

In whatſoever Province the *Engliſh* Merchants ſhall arrive, the moſt excellent *Begler-beys*, and others, our moſt honourable *Commanders*, are hereby order'd to ſhew them all imaginable Reſpect, nor to allow or ſuffer any Perſon whatſoever to affront or moleſt them.

And ſeeing the Petitioners are only acquainted with the *European* Language, and that they can't confer with our Subjects without an Interpreter, it is neceſſary therefore that their Brokers be Men acquainted with both Languages. If then they deſire ſuch Interpreters, whoever they ſhall chuſe, even if they are Chriſtians, they are at Liberty to make uſe of ſuch without Reſtraint.

The Petitioners are received under our moſt gracious Protection, and the Watch which they ſent is received ; and as a Mark of our Favour, by the Bearer hereof, we preſent them with Fifty Robles. And we hereby order our high truſty Treaſurers and Regulators of our Empire to regiſter

regiſter this our high Decree, and to put it in Execution, under Pain of our higheſt Diſpleaſure. Written in the Month of *Inmadi al avul*, or the Beginning of *Auguſt*, 1152 Years.

RESAU.
GULLE.
MISSAS.
SEAL.

On the 16th of *Auguſt*, in the Forenoon, we waited on the New Governor, at whoſe Levee we found all the principal Perſons in Town, to the Number of Fifty or more, all ſitting in one Room. He received us very kindly, bidding us welcome, and ſaid he was glad that the *Engliſh* thought well to come and trade at *Gilan* ; immediately Chairs were brought us to ſit down. We preſented him with the Decree the *Schah* had granted us, which he received very reſpectfully, ſtanding up whilſt he received it, and taking it in both Hands, touched his Forehead with it, which having done he ſat down : This was an Honour particularly due to the Decree, and when the Governor roſe to receive it the whole Company did the like. The Governor read the Decree to himſelf, and then gave it the *Vizir* to read, who alſo read it to himſelf. When it was return'd to us, the Governor ſaid he would ſend a Writer of his to our Houſe to copy the Decree, which Copy ſhould remain in his Chancellary, as an authentick Copy at all times to be referr'd to ; and from which other Copies would be taken and ſent to the other Governments of the Empire. Suppoſing we had now done all our Buſineſs, we were for taking leave

leave, when the Governor aſked Capt. *Elton*, who would tarry here and take care of our Affairs? We anſwer'd him, that our Effects that we had then were not ſo conſiderable but that we might leave them with our Servant, who would tarry until our Return, which we hoped would be early in the Spring. He reply'd, he ſhould think it much better that one of us ſhould tarry, and then if the *Schah* ſhould ſend to enquire of us concerning our Country, or the Nature of our Trade, one of us would be preſent to ſatisfy him in his Enquiries, which he doubted if any Servant could do. We inſtantly ſaw the *Governor* and the *Vizir* had had a Conference about us, and came to a Reſolution to detain us both if poſſible, therefore we thought it to very little Purpoſe to uſe Arguments; however, we parted upon it, and conſulted betwixt ourſelves, on which Mr. *Graham* conſented to tarry. Mean while the *Governor* ſaid, that whoever of us ſtaid behind he would do all in his Power to make *Gilan* agreeable to him. All this Time the *Vizir* and *Muſtapha* were whiſpering with the *Governor*, to whom we addreſs'd ourſelves, That ſince it appear'd ſo convenient to him that one of us ſhould tarry, tho' we muſt confeſs we could not in Purſuance of our Inſtructions, yet, as it was the *Governor*'s Pleaſure, we were willing to take that as a ſufficient Reaſon, and therefore Mr. *Graham* conſented to ſtay: He ſaid, he would take it as a particular Favour if Capt. *Elton* would ſtay with them, and ſend Mr. *Graham* back. This ſo unexpected a Requeſt a little ſhock'd the Captain, as knowing his wintering there would in a manner prove fatal to their Deſign; but as they had a *Decree* in their Favour,

vour, they thought they might act with more Reſolution than they had done formerly in treating with the *Vizir*; ſo Mr. *Elton* told the *Governor*, he would be very willing to tarry with him; as well to comply with what he was pleas'd to requeſt, as to ſave himſelf the Fatigue of ſo tedious and long a Journey, as it was from *Reſhd* to *Peterſburg*; but that the Neceſſity of their Affairs would by no Means permit him; ſo he begged he might be excuſed. But the *Governor*, by the *Vizir*'s and *Muſtapha*'s Inſinuations, as might be plainly ſeen by their Behaviour on this Occaſion, ſtill inſiſted on the *Captain*'s tarrying, which being ſo unreaſonable, animated him to make a ſhort Reply, which was, That as the *Schah* having condeſcended to grant us a *Decree*, we had ſtaid and done all the Honour to it we were capable of, therefore now we had nothing to do more at *Reſhd* but what Mr. *Graham* could diſpatch; that our principal Affairs lay now at *Peterſburg*, and thither we muſt return this Year, or a Period might be put to this new Undertaking, and that as I was apprized of this I could never conſent to tarry; that if he had any Diſtruſt or Suſpicion, then it were better that he kept us both here in Arreſt until he could have an Anſwer from the *Perſian* Ambaſſador, M. *Golafa* at *Peterſburg*, concerning us; that the *Captain* hoped he would excuſe him for ſaying again, that he could never conſent to winter here, ſeeing it would inevitably be the Ruin of all their Deſigns, and would render the *Schah*'s *Decree* in their Favour of no Effect. To which the *Governor* immediately reply'd, God forbid that he ſhould detain him a Moment againſt his Will; that ſince the Neceſſity of our Affairs would not permit it,

it, he heartily wiſh'd him a good Journey, and that he ſhould find at his Return, by the Reception Mr. *Graham* ſhould meet with, the Civilities that he had intended me, could I have tarry'd with them. So the Debate ended; after which he made us ſeveral Compliments, which we endeavour'd to return. The *Vizir* and *Muſtapha* look'd very much diſconcerted at Mr. *Elton*'s abſolute Refuſal to ſtay; their Intention being to have detain'd the *Captain*, never thinking that he would venture to carry things to ſuch Extremity; but they were miſtaken, there being a vaſt deal of Difference betwixt talking with a *Decree* in one's Hand, and talking when we were ſoliciting for one; all which they ſeemed unapprized of until they found it ſo.

The Deſign of the *Vizir* and *Muſtapha* in detaining the *Captain* (which may in ſome manner excuſe them) appear'd to us in this Light.

The *Perſians* are a *ſubtil* and *jealous* People, and on our propoſing to return and not wait for the *Schah*'s *Decree*, they concluded that we had certainly taken ſome Diſguſt at their Country, and would come no more there to trade; and that our Diſtaſte muſt proceed from our not having found the Silk Trade and the Markets of *Perſia* free as formerly, but in a manner all engroſs'd by the *Schah*. At the ſame time they could not but conſider of what Benefit our Trade to their Country would be to them, and therefore how deſirous the *Schah* would be to have us carry on a Commerce through his Dominions. Should we therefore refuſe to return again to trade, it would not only be a conſiderable Loſs to their Country, but, what more immediately concern'd them, they foreſaw ſuch a Neglect of ours

ours might produce an Inquiry fatal to them both; for when the *Schah* ſhould come to find that we ſlighted his gracious Decree, it would not be poſſible for the *Vizir* and *Muſtapha* to clear themſelves, by ſaying, they were ignorant why we returned not. The *Schah* would take it for granted, that their Miſmanagement was the Reaſon, and for a ſmall Miſtake in *Perſia* a Man often pays no leſs a Fine than his Head; of this both the *Vizir* and *Muſtapha* had a very recent Example in the Fate of their Father. Hence it came, that the Governor and they were willing to act as ſecure as poſſible in caſe of Accident, and had therefore rather have detained the Captain than Mr. *Graham*; but we have no Reaſon to think he had any Order from the *Schah* to detain either of us, on the Captain's inſiſting in the ſtrongeſt Terms to depart. They thought they had gained a Point, that they had prevailed over one of us to be willing to tarry with them; for in our Debate the Governor often ſaid, that it was his Advice, that one of us ſhould tarry here, and that he begg'd it as a Favour to be his Gueſt whilſt the other returned.

Although the *Perſians* are very courteous in their manner of ſpeaking, yet theſe were ſuch complaiſant Expreſſions, that the Governor, being ſo great a Perſon, would not have condeſcended to have made uſe of, had he had any Authority from his Prince to have detain'd either of us. Likewiſe we knew from the Stile and Force of our Decree, that if we inſiſted on returning, that he could not have kept any one of us; therefore it was only out of a Precaution, or to make a Merit of it, that they had perſuaded one of us to tarry with them in *Reſhd*. But as our Intentions

tions were to return there again, to prosecute the Design we first came about, so we were obliged to have a regard for the future, and not by our Obstinacy make all those in Power there, our Enemies for ever after. On this Consideration, since it was so much desired, that one of us should consent to tarry in *Persia*, we hoped it would appear to all our Friends as necessary as it did there to us. In the Afternoon we sent to the Governor for a Pass for Mr. *Elton*, and an *Armenian* Servant that attended him, which was immediately sent, on which he took Leave of the *Governor*, *Vizir*, *Mustapha*, and the *Coopcheen*. Mr. *Graham* and some *Armenian* Friends accompanied the Captain to *Perre Buzzar*.

On the 19th of *August*, early in the Morning, he got to *Zinzelle* Village, where the Packet-boat which belonged to the *Czarina* lay in the Road ready for us, having got over the Bar the Night before. The *Russ* Consul came on board our Smack to give her his Dispatches; the Weather was calm and pleasant.

On the 22d of *August* we weighed, and left *Zinzelle* Road, having a light Breeze Westerly. For want of Exercise the Captain had been sadly troubled with the Scurvy ever since he left *Saratoff* (it is a reigning Distemper with the *Europeans* in those Parts of *Persia*.) Having left the Land he betook himself to his Sea Journal.

On the 17th of *September* they arrived in *Chettery Bugara* Road, where the Guard-Ship of her *Czarian* Majesty lay at the Entrance of the *Volga*. The next Day in the Afternoon he went on Shore on the Island, where the commanding Officer and a Surgeon came to view us, to see if we were free from all Symptoms of the Plague, and

and make their Report: The Orders on which were, that we should perform a six Weeks *Quarentine*; but it had been a Custom of the Admiralty for a Year past, not to suffer the Empress her Servant to be detained, but to go immediately to *Astracan*, and only to keep the Passengers.

On the 4th of *October* a Smack of the *Czarina*'s arrived, which was the last which came this Year. She had 200 Bales on Board belonging to *Armenians* and *Indians*, for Consumption in *Russia*, but no Silk but what belonged to us. She had been three Weeks in her Passage. Another Vessel arrived the 12th of *October*, who had winter'd the Year before at *Reshd*, but she had been the whole Summer in finding her way hither, as mentioned formerly. At *Baku* she took in some Copper, and Silk from *Shamaky*, and afterwards filled up with Wine from *Derbent*. The mentioning of these Vessels gives again Occasion to speak of the *Caspian*, which we have before intimated, is a very fair Navigation: The Northern Parts are navigable nine Months in a Year, and the Southern all the Year round. From *Chettery Bugara* Island to *Zinzelle* is about 168 Leagues, although the whole Length of the *Caspian*. And as one Wind will serve, so it won't be esteemed a Week's Run for a full-built Vessel; and some of the *Czarina*'s Vessels, which are as full as close Lighters, have made that Passage in less than five Days. From *Chettery Bugara* to *Astrabat* is not 190 Leagues on a plain Course, so that it may be consider'd as the same Distance as to *Zinzelle*. *Astrabat* is a Port the *Russians* have visited now and then, but never frequented, for no *Russ* Vessels what-

whatſoever at this time go any farther than *Zinzelle*, although *Aſtrabat* is equally as good a Road and Haven, and as great a depth of Water on its Bar as *Zinzelle*.

Reſhd being the only Silk Market in *Gilan*, the *Armenians* made this City their principal Market, and this is what occaſions the *Ruſs* Veſſels which bring the *Armenians* and their Goods over from *Aſtracan*, all to reſort to *Zinzelle*, which is the Sea Port of *Reſhd*. *Zinzelle* and *Aſtrabat* are the only Ports the *Britiſh* Veſſels will be under a Neceſſity of frequenting on the *Perſian* Side, and they happen to be two of the beſt Havens on all the *Caſpian*, they being but a Week's Run, although ordinarily a Fortnight from *Aſtracan*. When the *Engliſh* Merchants come to be poſſeſs'd of Veſſels of their own, they may manage the Trade to and from *Perſia* as they find moſt to their Advantage; at preſent we will ſuppoſe the following manner.

All Goods deſigned for *Zinzelle* or *Aſtrabat* muſt be forwarded from *Peterſburg* by the beginning of *February*, that they may arrive at *Saratoff* on the *Volga* about the end of that Month, at which Time the *Volga* is there open, and about the Beginning of *April* theſe Goods may probably arrive at *Aſtracan*, or at *Chettery Bugara*; if a proper Veſſel lay ready to take them in, they may very well arrive at *Zinzelle* or *Aſtrabat* before *May*. Theſe Goods may be ſold at *Reſhd* or *Meſched* by the middle of *July*, and by the middle of *Auguſt* the Returns may be inveſted in Silk, the Product of the ſame Year; this Silk may be ſhipp'd off before the end of *Auguſt*, at *Zinzelle*; and if the Veſſel that takes them in ſails directly, then before the end of *Sep-*

September they may arrive at *Aſtracan*; in *October* they may reach *Saratoff*, from thence by Sledge-way, and arrive at *Peterſburg* the beginning of *January*.

This is ſuppoſing no *Quarentine* is required on Goods coming from *Gilan*; but if ſuch Goods are required to perform a three Months *Quarentine*, then they will arrive three Months later in *Peterſburg*, that is, about the 1ſt of *April*; this is Time enough to be ſhipp'd off by the firſt Ships that ſail that Year for *London*; nay altho' it were the middle of *May*, it is ſooner than the Ice is out of the River *Neva*; and had theſe Goods arrived even in *December*, they muſt have remained for the ſame Ships, ſo in this Caſe the *Quarentine* ſeems to be no hinderance. But the above State of the Caſe ſuppoſes that Goods ſent to *Perſia* meet with an immediate Market, and that their Returns can be as immediately inveſted in Silk, both which may not happen, and then the *Quarentine* would be of a very great Diſadvantage. As for Example, Goods arriving in *Gilan* in *May*, perhaps ſhan't be ſold till the *January* following; and then the Returns of thoſe Goods in Silks can't be ſhipp'd from *Zinzelle* till the beginning of *March*, and arrive about the latter End at *Aſtracan*; and by reaſon of the *Quarentine* they can't be forwarded from thence until the end of *June*; at *Saratoff* they can't arrive before *Auguſt*, nor in *Peterſburg* before the end of *September*; although this is Time enough to be ſhipt off for *London*; but the Returns from thence can't be made until the next enſuing Spring; ſo that the Opportunity of ſending theſe Goods time enough to arrive by the Winter-way at *Saratoff* is loſt, by being four Months

Months too late at *Peterſburg*. What may be done by way of *Riga* in Importations or Exportations, we have not yet had any Experience of.

The *Quarentine*, whilſt it continues, neceſſitates us to ſell our Goods that we import into *Gilan*, within the Space of two Months, or elſe we can't make our Returns to and from *Gilan* to *London* in leſs than three Years. Did no *Quarentine* interfere they might be made in two, and the Merchants have eight Months time to diſpoſe of their Goods; ſo that the Continuation of the *Quarentine* on Goods coming from *Gilan* make a ſurpriſing Difference, the Profit being ſo much leſſened thereby, that all Means muſt be uſed to get that removed; and it is likewiſe the Intereſt of the *Czarina* to have it done on account of the Encouragement it will give to us to carry on the Trade largely and with Diſpatch, whereby her Cuſtoms, *&c.* will increaſe in Proportion.

It is to be obſerved, that the Northen Provinces in *Perſia* which produce the moſt and beſt ſort of Raw Silk (from whence the Southern Provinces, and the Silk Manufacturies at *Meſched* are ſupply'd, beſides the great Quantity that goes to *Turky*) are three; as *Gilan*, the chief City is *Reſhd*; *Sherman*, whoſe chief City is *Shamaky*; *Arraſh*, whoſe chief City is *Ganges*. The two former of theſe Provinces are on the South-weſt Shoar of the *Caſpian*, and the latter is adjacent to them, not far from the *Caſpian*; that they could not hear that any *Engliſh* woolen Goods, either from the *India* Company, or the *Turky*, ever reached *Meſched*, but only *Holland* woolen Cloths brought by the *Armenians*; whereas a Trade to that Place with our woolen Cloth might,

might, in a ſhort Time, be the moſt conſiderable Branch of the *Engliſh* woolen Trade; nor is it unlikely that we may come to cloath the *Schah*'s Armies, which are numerous, as we can bring it much cheaper than any other Nation, and afford to give more for their Raw Silk, *&c.* Beſides we can ſend Lead, Pewter, Bar-Tin, which the *Perſians* are now ſupply'd with from the *India* and *Turky* Company's Settlements.

The *Perſians* and *Armenians*, in the Delivery of their Cloth, reckon ten *Ruſs* Arſheens to make ſeven *Perſian*, which is as 1 to 1.428, accounting the *Perſian* Arſheen $\frac{25}{1000}$ greater than we found it with regard to the *Ruſſian*, or 2*l.* 6*s.* *per Cent.*

In their Bills of Exchange the *Armenians* reckon *Perſian* Money to be 30 *per Cent.* better than *Ruſs* Money; ſo that for 100 Rubles *Ruſs* Money paid in *Aſtracan*, they paſs their Bills payable in *Gilan* but for 70 Rubles *Perſian* Money.

A *Perſian* * Zolotnick is $\frac{11}{12}$ of a *Ruſs* Zolotnick; a *Perſian* common Batman contains 1280 *Perſian* Zolotnicks, or 14 Pounds, *Ruſs* 5454; a *Perſian* Silk Batman contains 1200 *ditto*, or 13 Pounds, 6363; ſo that three Silk Batman weigh 40 Pounds, 9029 *Ruſs*. We found a *Perſian Schah*'s Arſheen to be 39.4 *Engliſh* Inches, ſo that a *Ruſs* Arſheen is to a *Perſian* as 1 to 1.402.

Hence, if the *Perſian* Ruble be 30 *per Cent.* better than the *Ruſs* Ruble, the *Perſian* Arſheen exceeds the *Ruſs* Arſheen 42.85 *per Cent.* according to the *Armenians*.

* 96 *Ruſs* Zolotnicks to an Ounce Troy Weight.

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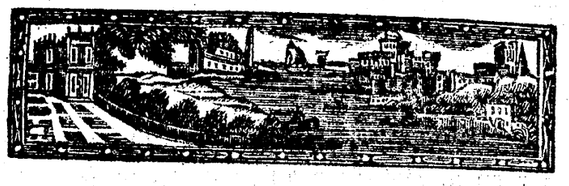

SOME

ACCOUNT

OF THE

Rise and *Successes*

OF

THAMAS KOULI KAN,

KING of *PERSIA*.

SCHAH *Thamas*, who was then called the Prince, had, after seven Years Misfortune, got together an Army of about 30,000 good Soldiers out of the Northern Provinces, under a very good General *(a) Thamas Kan*, who in *June* 1729 defeated the *(b) Ab-*

(a) Now the famous *Schah Nadir*, or *Kouli Kan*.
(b) A People that join'd the *Ofgoons* to conquer *Persia*, under *Meer Mahomet*, the Son of *Meer Wise*.

 dailes

dalles intirely in ſeveral ſet Battles, and took their chief City *Hyraut*, which lies to the North of *Perſia*. This News ſoon reached *Iſpahan*, and being greatly exaggerated according to the particular Cuſtom of *Perſia*, as alſo the Number of the *Kan*'s Forces, ſo alarmed *(c) Horroff*, who was then in Poſſeſſion of *Iſpahan*, a Man of known Bravery, that he very imprudently took a Reſolution to go in queſt of the Prince before he ſhould grow too ſtrong (who then had no Thoughts of turning his Force that way until the next Spring.) Accordingly *Horroff*, in the beginning of *Auguſt*, ſet out with an Army of 35,000 Men, compoſed of *Ofgoons*, and *(d) Dongazances*, and in twenty-five Days march met and engaged the Prince's Forces, who ſo intirely routed him, that he flew back to *Iſpahan* in half the Time.

This happy and unexpected Event determined the Prince to purſue this Victory, and to ſend his General with his Forces to provoke him to another Engagement. *Horroff* thought it beſt for him to try his Fortune in the Field, but being dubious of the Event, before he left the City, he packed up all the Royal Treaſury and Jewels, ready to carry with him in caſe he ſhould be routed, and at the ſame Time maſſacred all the principal Inhabitants he could find, to the Number of 2800. The *(e) Engliſh* and *Dutch* Agents he ordered to come into the new Walls the *Ofgoons* built at the firſt taking the

(c) A Kinſman and Succeſſor of *Meer Mahomet*, who took *Iſpahan*.

(d) A Nation that joined the *Ofgoons*, after they revolted, and ſet up for themſelves.

(e) Mr. *Cockell* was then the *Engliſh* Agent.

City,

City, and put them into the *(f) Caravanſera Shaw*, in the *Kyſerce*, under a Guard.

1729. The next Battle was on the 2d of *November*, in the Morning, in which he had no better Fortune than in the former; the News of which was at *Iſpahan* at Noon, though at Forty Miles diſtance. He, with ſome few ſcattered Forces, did not arrive till Night, and going to his Palace he ſat himſelf down in his *(g) Chehil-ſitoon*, very much dejected; the *Naib*, or Prime Miniſter came to him, and aſk'd him what he did there, that the *Perſians* were at the City Gates; upon which he loaded his Treaſury, and that Part of his *(h) Haram* which he deſigned to take with him, and fled in ſuch a precipitate manner, that he never thought of the *Engliſh* and *Dutch* Merchants, to their great Joy. This Opportunity they would not ſlip, having before bribed the Guard to be in the greater Readineſs to embrace a favourable Opportunity; they ſlipt away early in the Morning, Sword in Hand, to the Company's Houſe. At Noon the City was all in an Uproar; what *Perſians* were hid, and in the adjacent Places, came in great Numbers to plunder; and it was at the riſque of their Lives they ſaved the Company's Houſe.

Schah Thamas's General did not arrive till three Days after, and had he only ſent 6000 Men after the *Ofgoons*, he had intirely deſtroy'd them. *Horroff*, after he had gone two or three Leagues, and ſaw no one coming after him, ſent back his *Athama Doulet* (or Prime Miniſter) with a Par-

(f) A Royal Inn near his Palace.

(g) A Hall belonging to his Palace, called ſo from having 40 Pillars in it.

(h) His Women.

ty

ty to maſſacre as many as he could, and fire the City: But juſt as he got to the Royal Gardens, a Mile from the City, ſomebody amongſt the Mobile wiſer than the reſt, rightly thinking that they came with no good Deſign, order'd the Drums to be beat, which threw them into ſuch a Pannick, that they were glad to make the beſt of their way back, imagining that the Prince's Forces had taken Poſſeſſion of the Town.

Horroff's firſt Deſign was to go to (i) *Carmenia*, but after five or ſix Days march, hearing that Road was made impaſſable, went to *Shiraſs*, a large City (about 200 Miles from *Iſpahan*, and 30 from old *Perſepolis*, in the Road to *Gombroon*) but in ſuch a Fright, that they dropt great Numbers of their Women and Children on the Road, which the *Perſians*, as they met with, killed. On his Arrival at *Shiraſs* he burnt the City, put the Inhabitants to the Sword, and took Poſſeſſion of the Caſtles.

In the mean Time *Schah Thamas*, inſtead of purſuing the *Ofgoons* remained two Months in *Iſpahan*, levying of Money in a very rigorous manner to ſatisfy his greedy Soldiers, which made almoſt every one repent of the Change. However, about the latter end of *December* he went after *Horroff*; they met near *Shiraſs*, where, after an obſtinate Battle, *Horroff* was entirely defeated, but he himſelf eſcaped with his Treaſure, and about 2000 *Ofgoons*, and took their Rout to the *Bamouchees*, a People that live chiefly on Robberies. At laſt he was killed by a Party of the *Hoſſem Caus*, who immediately after rendered

(i) A Province where the Wool of that Name comes from, about 400 Miles from *Iſpahan*.

their

their Obedience to *Schah Thamas*, who fleeced the Inhabitants of *Shiraſs* of every thing the *Ofgoons* had left them; from thence he continu'd his March to *Hamadon*, near which Place he defeated a Party of the *Turks*.

The *Schah* on his Return to *Iſpahan* made *Thamas Kan* his *Vachert Doulet*, the greateſt Poſt a Subject can enjoy, he having the ſole Adminiſtration of Affairs, and gave him his Seal: On which he carried it with ſo high a Hand, that it was ſoon ſeen that he had the Crown in view, and that the King began to be heartily tired of him, as well as every body elſe, for he had aſſum'd an unlimited Power; but as he was engaged in a vigorous War againſt the *Turks*, the *Schah* was afraid to ſend for his Head. To ſuch an Height did this Man raiſe himſelf, chiefly by his undaunted Courage; for it was not ten Years paſt, that he was only a Camel-man in the Province of *Coraſan*, where he was born; to which Place he ſent a prodigious Treaſure with the *Schah*'s Siſter's Aunt, whom he had given him to Wife, and one of the *Schah*'s Siſters, whom he had ſent for a Wife for his Son. Had the *Kan*'s Deſigns againſt the *Turks* prov'd unſucceſsful, it was everybody's Opinion he muſt have gone over to them with what Forces he could have prevail'd upon to follow him, he having ſo utterly ruin'd and deſtroy'd every Place he paſſed thro', that nobody would have been able to make head againſt him.

All this Time the *Ruſſians* were Maſters of the Province of *Gilan*, and uſed all the Inhabitants ſo well, that they had no other Concern but the Fear that it ſhould fall under the *Perſian* Government again.

Perſia

Persia being in this distracted Condition, the *English* Merchants endeavour'd all they were able to repair to *Gambroon*; but after using their utmost Efforts found it impracticable, and the more so from the Villainy of one *Stephen*, their Linguist, who during the late Revolution, when the *Ofgoons* had the Government, imagining that they could do nothing without him, obliged them to chuse one *Hemet* in his Place, which provoked him to do them all the ill Offices in his Power.

The *Dutch*, during the Siege, before the *Ofgoons* took the City, got prodigious Riches by the Sale of a vast Quantity of Sugar for Money and Jewels, for which *Schah Mahomed* imprisoned and fined them very extraordinarily; yet they made a considerable Figure, tho' they pretended to be poor. The *Armenians* put many of their Effects under the Protection of the *Dutch*, which were most of them discover'd and seized: And what with Losses they had by Sea, and none of their Factors returning from *India*, and others not return'd from other Parts, it was reckoned their Women exceeded them twenty to one in number. *Horroff* enquir'd much after the King's Mother, but could never hear of her; she was kept privately alive by the old *Eunuch* in the *Haram* like a Servant.

Now let us turn our Eye to *Thamas Kan*. After he had beat the *Ofgoons* at *Shiraſs*, he went against the *Turks*, whom he defeated in several set Battles, and retook **Ahmadoon* and *Tabreez*: When the *Abdallers*, join'd with the *Ofgoons*, seized upon *Hyraut*, upon which he left the King in *Ispahan* without any Forces, taking all along

* A large City on the Road to *Babylon*, and about nine Days Journey from *Ispahan*.

along with him to attack the *Turks*, whom he intirely defeated in a set Battle, and retook the City of *Hyraut*. In the mean time *Schah Thamas* got together, as well as he could, an indifferent Army, left *Isphahan* in *October* and retook two Castles from the *Ofgoons*, and encreased his Army in his March in the Depth of a severe Winter to *Tabreez*, and in the Spring to *Errivan*, where he engaged and routed a large Body of *Turks* and besieged the Castle; but the Country thereabouts being quite ruin'd and unable to furnish him with Provisions, he was forced to come back to *Tabreez* to give his Horses Grass, having narrowly escap'd being taken himself as he was endeavouring to cut off a Convoy of Provisions going to the Relief of the *Tartars*. However, soon after *Ashmud*, *Bashaw* of *Babylon*, defeated *Schah Thamas*, took all his Baggage, and 80 Pieces of Cannon; the King fled to *Koom*, a large City, to stay until he could get his straggling Forces together. The News of this gave them the utmost Consternation at *Ispahan*, that every one was packing up what they esteem'd most valuable, ready to fly; which the *English* would have done as well as the rest, if the King had not as soon as he lost the Battle, sent a Party of Troops to keep the City in order, and forbid on pain of Death, any body's leaving it. All their Dependence for Safety was on *Thamas Kan*, who immediately after he had reduced the Castle of *Hyraut*, march'd to the King's Assistance with a good Army. But their greatest Security was the approaching Winter, for the *Persians* had no Forces between *Ispahan* and *Ashmadoon*; so that had the *Turks* pursued their Victory, they

 might

might eaſily have taken the City; for the Governor expected no leſs, having deſign'd on their Approach to have evacuated and ſet it on Fire. The King's *Haram* (or Women) were removed to *Corbin*.

In *Auguſt*, 1732, *Thamas Kan* ſeized the King, and ſent him a Priſoner under a ſtrong Guard to *Muſhatt*, ſetting on the Throne *Schah Abbaſs* the Third, a Child of three Months old. To keep his Army true and faithful to him, it is not to be deſcribed how he drain'd and oppreſs'd all *Perſia*; how miſerable and deſolate it was at this Time: However he was defeated in two Skirmiſhes he had with the *Turks*, the firſt of which he fought in *Schah Abbaſs* the Third's Name, the ſecond in his own Name; but in the third, for a Tryal of Fortune, he fought in the Name of *Schah Thamas*, in which he got the better. So ſuperſtitious are the *Perſians*, that on this Turn of Succeſs he ſent for *Schah Thamas* again, with a Pretence to re-inſtate him, after he had taken a ſolemn Oath to forgive all that was paſt. But it was only to give him the Title of King; for he had a Notion that Fortune would continue her Favours to him fighting under his Name, at the ſame time keeping the exorbitant Power he was poſſeſſed of in his own Hands for his Security. How he afterwards aſſum'd the Throne, with his Expedition into *India*, and other Succeſſes and various Events of his Life, we refer to Mr. *Frazer*'s ingenious Hiſtory of him, juſt publiſh'd.

THE END.